



The Spirit at First November 2018

A Pastor's Ponderings.....

The middle class believes in freedom, but deny freedom when its exercise imperils their position in society; they profess a morality of love and unselfishness but do not achieve an unselfish group attitude toward a less privileged group; they claim to abhor violence and yet use it both in international conflict and in social crises in which their interests are imperiled; they want mutuality of interests between the classes rather than a class struggle but the mutuality must not be so complete as to destroy all their special privileges.

Reinhold Niebuhr in Moral Man and Immoral Society: page 176 & 177

Our Wednesday Night Searchers group is reading the above mentioned book by Reinhold Niebuhr. He wrote the book in 1932, 14 years after the Russian Revolution and on the brink of WW2 and the rise of Nazism. As a young pastor in Detroit, he also worked tirelessly for manufacturing employees of the burgeoning auto industry, fighting for a decent wage, safe conditions and benefits for the people in the lowest rungs of the corporate ladder. The FBI had a file on him for his beliefs in a more socialized understanding of society and economic policy while he was also used to justify the United States use of force to combat communism. He advised presidents for decades and remains a favorite public theologian of many a powerful Washington politician on both sides of the aisle.

His writings are a bit dense at times, but it is amazing that after 85 years, they are still just as relevant as they were in 1932. He prophesied the corruption in the Communist system and the rampant concentration of wealth in a democratic capitalistic society. He understood how people's minds worked and was able to explain how the various classes behaved, what made them react to various stimuli and how each group within society interacted and or tried to manipulate the other. He even understood the political nature of the court system in our country. He was a brilliant man and one of my favorites from seminary.

Some would say he is a realist in his application of theology to civic society. Some in our Searchers Group find him a bit too dour and depressing but if understanding is the beginning of change then reading Reinhold Niebuhr today is a must. His lessons are easily applicable to our current political climate from the Black Lives Matter to the ever increasing concentration of wealth, from a political campaign of fear that benefits the wealthy at the expense of the poor who ironically vote for that candidate to the inability of white middle class folks to understand white privilege, from international violence to the #MeToo Movement, from the death of the idealist dream of slowly progressing to Shangri La to the rise of wealthy oligarchs in Russia.

We are most of the way through *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, but despite its difficulty to weigh through it, I would encourage all of you to read this great classic author and book. So many of us are looking for ways to understand what is happening in our country and world, so many of us are bewildered by the events of the day, so many of us feel disempowered by the world as it is, so many of our families are divided along political lines.....reading Reinhold Niebuhr will, I believe, give you a clear grip of politics, power, civic society and religion [he is an ordained minister!]. Understanding the forces that underlie our society and human motivations, including our own, will help us move forward with hope.

Let me know how your reading goes and if we need to have another group to grasp what he is saying to us 85 years later.

Blessings to you all, Rev. Mark

SPECIAL SERVICES & EVENTS IN NOVEMBER

Communion will be handed out to the congregation at both services on November 4th

Special Collection this month is for the Food Pantry on Sunday, November 18th

November 3rd ~ Saturday Afternoon Worship, 4:30 pm

The clergy and Deacons are exploring ways to attract members and friends to worship by creating a new worship service on Saturday at 4:30 p.m. Everyone is so busy with activities throughout the year and Sunday morning is prime time for scheduling an event, unlike in times past, when nothing but church was occurring. Our new service is informal, interactive and includes communion each week. Families with kids are welcome and we meet in Fellowship Hall. Come and bring a friend to this new adventure in church worship.



November 11th ~ 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day, 6:00 am

The College of Piping in Scotland has organized 1500 pipers worldwide to commemorate the signing of the Armistice to end World War I at the exact time and 100th Anniversary of the actual event. At 6:00 a.m. on November 11th, 2018, Beth Paul and the St Andrews Pipe Band will play two songs from that era, one written for the actual event: *On the Road to Passchendaele* and *When the Battle is Over*. We will gather to remember the “*Great War*” and the sacrifice of so many of our young men and women who gave their lives for the effort. They will also be playing a few non-military songs for the occasion and there will be a couple of very short prayers. It is early in the morning but is well worth rising to honor a great moment in the history of the world and our country. See you then!

November 18th ~ Advent Decoration / Workshop & Pot Luck

One of the best moments in our family’s life is decorating our home for Christmas. We all help and have good snacks and Christmas music playing. Then once we are done, we sit down and look around and begin to feel the Christmas spirit. This may be true in your home as well. Well, let me invite you to decorate your OTHER HOME.....the church. On November 18th after the second service we will have a pot luck lunch and then decorate the sanctuary. Laurie will also organize her fantastic ADVENT WORKSHOP where young ones [of all ages!] and their parents make the characters in the manger. She has all the materials needed; just come and get ready to use scissors and glue. Upstairs we will be hanging the big wreaths and garland in the Sanctuary. We will put up the Christmas tree and make sure the bows are perfectly puffy! We have an awful lot of fun both downstairs and up so come with your whole family and enjoy the day, make a manger for your home and get OUR HOME ready for the Christmas season.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR NEWS

Thank you for calling me here last year! November marks my one-year anniversary at First Congregational. In that time, I have successfully adjusted to living in Vermont (I've hiked both Mount Mansfield and Camel's Hump) and being a part of this worshiping community. You have embraced me full heartedly. I am happy to be here. I am doing everything that I thought I would be doing in ordained ministry!

Last month when I preached, "Reading the Bible Today," I offered a way to read the Bible in modern times. Many read the Bible literally and as if the Bible were an instruction manual for life, and as if it is a cohesive document. It is hard for me to read the Bible in that way. When I read the Bible, I see many contradictions, pre-modern understandings of how the universe works, and too much God ordained bloodshed. I think it's important to be aware of the historical and cultural limits of the Bible. We can read the Bible as descriptive of how ancient people lived their lives and ordered their society. It is alright to say that some aspect of the Bible is absolutely wrong and why. If we cannot read all the Bible as an instruction manual for life, how then do we use the Bible as a source of life giving information? As one of my professors in seminary said, the Bible then becomes a source to question our lives. If ancient people believed God ordained them to slaughter innocent people, why do some people still believe that? If ancient people believed God was okay with slavery, then why do some people still believe that some people are inferior, and also why are there times when I feel that others are inferior? These are just a couple of ways the Bible can be a source to question our lives today. Sure, faith is easier when someone or something tells me what to believe. Faith is harder when we are told that we need to wrestle with the sacred text. But Christianity, and really faith, isn't supposed to be easy. Anything that gives us life really shouldn't be all that easy. For it's in the struggle and the contemplation that we truly find ourselves and live.

High School Youth Group will be the first Sunday of each month.
We encourage youth to participate in the life of the whole church.

High School Youth Group Schedule

Sunday, November 4th, 5-7pm @FCCEJ

Pizza will be provided.

Pastoral Note: I am working diligently to build a successful high school youth program. I reduced our routinely scheduled day to the first Sunday of each month, so we can work together to do a youth group related activity at another point in each month. For this to be successful, I need your help. I need your input on what activities you want to participate in, how you are able to serve, and super importantly, your communication and response to emails.



Laurie's Lens

Our church continues to be a leader in the VT UCC Conference and because of this I receive phone calls from pastors and Christian Education leaders in the state asking questions about programming, resources, asking to pick my brain. I also connect with CE leaders to share ideas and support each other and therefore have gotten to know several across Vermont, New England and beyond thanks to attending NEAUCE (New England Association of United Church Educators) each year. I was talking to my colleague at Middlebury UCC, Jennifer, about a proposal that she was very excited about and her Church Council voted to have her take some time and travel to other UCC churches to see what creative initiatives they are have that is attracting and keeping their families attending. She invited me to come along! So with Mark & Josh's support I approached our CE committee and presented them with the idea of me traveling with Jennifer to learn more and having a both benefit from this kind of a research project together. They too were very supportive. CE sent a proposal to Finance and Council for me to go on a Faith Formation Research Project.

This research project will happen in January and February, allow me to see other UCC programs for children and youth in action in other parts of the New England (and across the country) as well as many other facets of church life (worship, youth, young adult, visitation, staff configuration, stewardship, mission, etc) and bring those ideas back with me to our church (and Vermont Conference churches) allowing First Church to continue to be a leading church and voice for Faith Formation in our area and in the Vermont Conference. I will be needing to do a lot of preparation for planning these visits as well as preparation here for our programs to continue smoothly in my absence. Not to worry. I will be in close contact with volunteers and staff. I am embracing this adventure with a lot of excitement, knowing that this experience of seeing other UCC churches and how they 'do church' will give us all new ideas for our future programming and keep First Church alive for years to come. I plan to work on a PowerPoint that I will be able to share with all of you as well as other churches about what others are doing across the UCC and create a network of the CE folk and churches that Jennifer and I meet so that we can stay connected in conversations, learning from each other as we move forward in this ever changing world of faith formation and church.

Watch for the Family Resource table in Fellowship Hall on a weekly bases with items that you can take home with you and use. I am making room in my office for new programming and therefore anything I touch that I have not used in the last few years I will be passing off to all of you.

Our Hands On Mission Sundays in October and November are focusing on the Faith Formation Offering that the children and youth voted on for 2018. We have some of our Jamaica team joining the HoM volunteers to talk more about Jamaica children that attending the school we are supporting with our offering for scholarship money of uniforms and books. Our goal is to make a project that will travel down with the team in 2019, something that shares who we are with the children in Jamaica.

May we all step out and catch faith in action around us, knowing that God is ever with us in these changing times, helping us to grow and be all we can be.

Blessing & Peace, Laurie Chipman, Christian Education Director

DEACON'S CORNER

Greetings, everyone! As you read this, FCCEJ has already held its "maiden voyage" of Saturday services! We hope you were able to come see what it is all about. For several years, our ministers and membership have discussed the possibility of having a family-friendly service on Saturday afternoon/evening. As sports teams and organizations plug games and events into Sunday mornings with reckless abandon, it is sometimes challenging for families and kids to get to church. In addition, we have a lot of people in our congregation who enjoy skiing and other daytime weekend pursuits. The goal of this new, once-a-month service is to provide a casual alternative for those who are not able to come on Sunday morning. The format will be shorter, less formal, with a variety of music, so that it works for children and also provides a chance to experience some innovative forms of worship. The Deacons and Clergy are excited about this new opportunity, and welcome any input or feedback as we move forward and try it out. The service will be held on the **first Saturday of each month at 4:30 PM**, downstairs in Fellowship Hall -- please join us!



Peter Schmalz, Deacons Co-Chair

MUSIC



17th Annual Festival of Choirs

Interfaith and community choirs from northern Vermont are joining together for the 17th Annual Festival of Choirs on December 1, 2018 at 6:00 PM. The festival will take place at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 73 Essex Way, Essex Junction, VT and admission is free of charge.

Prelude at 5:40 PM with Carolyn Bever Violin Studio.

Featured choirs: The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction, Men at First and Finally @ First, Heavenly Harmony, Grand Isle County Chorus, St. Pius X Folk Choir, Winooski Community Choir and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Festival Choir. The combined choirs will sing the Hallelujah Chorus, the audience is invited to join in. Come early and invite your friends to this event!

SAVE THE DATES

November 18th ~ Advent Devotionals/Daily Reflections available in FH and by the staff offices

December 16th ~ Christmas Pageant Sunday during both our worship services

August 5-9, 2019 ~ Vacation Bible Camp 2019

To Mars and Beyond: Explore Where God's Power Can Take You!

STEWARDSHIP



The Stewardship Committee would like to thank each and every one of you who supported the 2019 Stewardship Campaign. Each pledge serves to help us plan the budget and serve the church community by supporting the programs that we have all grown to know and love.

Please note that if October 21, (Stewardship Sunday) came and went without you returning your pledge card - it's not too late. What comes next in our Stewardship Drive is the loving process of contacting all of the church members that we haven't heard from to see if they have any questions that need answered, or guidance that needs to be provided.

Remember that you can help us out by returning your pledge card regardless of whether or not you are pledging. We encourage you to give freely - the amount that is right for you. Any amount can be the right amount! We are fortunate to be a part of church community that does not expect, does not dictate, and does not judge the openhearted giving of our members. If pledging for the 2019 year is not right for you, just let us know and we will know that follow-up emails or phone calls are not needed.

In short:

If you haven't yet returned your pledge card - and want to pledge, -- it's not too late.

If you haven't yet returned your pledge card - and will not be pledging this year, -- just let us know.

Thanks again for the many ways that you offer your Stewardship and Thank You for supporting this year's annual pledge drive!

2018 Special Offerings: November-Food Pantry, December-Christmas Fund
2019 Special Offerings: January-Endowment Fund, February-Outdoor Ministry,
March-One Great Hour of Sharing, April-Pastor's Fund, May-Per Capita

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Music Time During Faith Formation

Cherubs ~ Preschool - 2nd grade gather in the Gym on Sundays to sing a song or two with Jenny Bourn before moving on to their peer group locations.

Joyful Noise ~ 3rd - 8th graders gather in the Marvin Lounge for songs and music with Jessica Moos before moving on to their peer group locations.



Faith Formation Sunday School Calendar

Preschool – 8th Grade

November 4th ~ 1st Sunday Spiritual Friends with Preschool & Kindergarteners

November 11th & 18th ~ Music & Peer Group time

November 25th ~ Hands-On Mission Sunday



November 25th & Dec. 2nd & 9th ~ Christmas Pageant Rehearsals

Calling all Junior Youth and High School Youth to the first rehearsal on November 25th when parts will be decided. Please mark your calendars and come join Laurie and Pastor Josh! If you can't make November 25th, please be in touch and share your interest in a speaking part (small or big) or helping behind the scenes. We are looking for adult volunteers to help assist with set, costumes and running of lines at all rehearsals.



Rehearsal on Sunday, December 9th is from 11:30 – 2:00pm

Note corrected time from youth calendar

(Preschool – 4th join in for the first 20 minutes to learn their part)

Saturday, December 15th – dress rehearsal - TBA

Pageant Sunday will be on December 16th during both services - all youth arrive at 7:45am

Potluck lunch to follow after the 10:15am service. Youth, please RSVP to Laurie or Pastor Josh.

Acolytes



Acolytes carry the light of Christ into the Sanctuary at the beginning of worship to remind us that God is with us. Then they 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 older to participate in worship. You can acolyte solo or with another friend or parent. Signup sheet is located on the bulletin board before you walk up the steps to worship. Please contact Laurie for more info lchipman@fccej.org

Ring the Bell

All children and their families are welcome to sign up and ring the church bell 15 minutes before worship begins. Signup sheet is located on the bulletin board before you walk up the steps to worship (beside the Acolyte signup). 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 \$637.88

Keep remembering to bring your Offering!

\$1 a week can go a long way! Just think about what you spend \$1 on! 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

Junior Youth @ FCCEJ

5th - 8th graders meet TWICE a month

Faith & Mission Focus ~ Meal ~ Fellowship/Games

We had a great turn out on Call Out Sunday, September 16th. We are looking forward to seeing those of you that we missed soon. Junior Youth Registration forms & Fall calendars can be found on the Junior Youth bulletin board right outside Laurie's office (where the red UCC youth t-shirt hangs).

Mark your calendars!

November 4th ~ 11:30am – 1:30pm

Help usher & greet at 10:15am service

November 18th ~ 3pm – 4:30pm

November 25th ~ 5-7pm Pageant Rehearsal

High School Youth Group @ FCCEJ

November 4th, 5-7pm, dinner provided

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 be good stewards of 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.



You are invited to stop by the Nursery and say hello to our new Nursery staff person, Jennifer Morse. Jennifer comes with years of experience and her first Sunday with us was Welcome Back Sunday.

FELLOWSHIP & LEARNING

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. Please join us with your lunch on



Thursday, November 1st with your lunch at noon in the Marvin Lounge. Our guest speaker is the new municipal manager, Evan Teich. This is your opportunity to meet Evan, a 30 year municipal veteran who comes to us by way of Michigan. Come with your questions and join the discussion about this new town and village model of governance. If you'd like to know more about Evan Teich, go to the Essex Reporter

<https://www.essexreporter.com/town-and-village-name-new-manager/>



Essex Eats Out Community Dinners Continue...

1st Friday of Every Month ~ November 2nd

Come - Help - Eat www.essexeatsout.org

****Brand New** Bereavement Support Group**

Many if not all of us have been touched by the loss of someone we hold near and dear. That loss stays with us and shapes us our entire lives and reminds us of the love we had for that person. The journey of grief takes many twists and turns and if one does not deal adequately with their losses, then it has the potential to negatively affect one's daily living forever. Sharon Dettenrieder has led Bereavement Support Groups for decades and will be working with our ordained staff to create a support group where people can go and share their grief journey and draw support from others who are travelling down the same road. Meetings in the Marvin Lounge on the **2nd Thursday of each month, 7-8:30 p.m. Nov 8th & Dec 13th for the rest of 2018.**

Everyone, church and community members are welcome, bring a friend!



Wednesday Night Searchers, 7pm

We are currently reading *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* by Reinhold Niebuhr. Niebuhr writes cogently on the morality of individuals and the moral ethics of society or the lack thereof. He illuminates why moral individuals are unable to think outside of their own self-interest, and how that impacts society at large, and how to address this for the betterment of all. Niebuhr was the most influential American public theologian in the 20th Century. We'll have a healthy conversation on ethics, politics, religion, morality, and more. The book is available online via e-books or pdf and there are a few print copies around to borrow.

Check out the bulletin for info on what we will be doing next...

Third Thursday Potluck Series

Third Thursday, November 15th from 5:45 to 7pm

The 3rd Thursday potluck will be in the Marvin Lounge this month from 5:45 to 7pm. Bring a dish to share. Supper will begin by 6pm and our program will start around 6:30pm. Join us! All are welcome!



The Community of Bridge

On the third Friday of every month, anyone interested in having some fun playing bridge is welcome to come to the Marvin Lounge. We always have delicious snacks and the winner of the day gets a jar of Rev. Mark's homemade jam. On **November 16th**, we will be gathering from 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. to play. There is always great conversation and sometimes some stunningly great bridge playing!!! All are welcome.



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
November 16th from 6:00-8:00 pm



Yoga and Meditation @ First!



This fall, Jonah is offering class on **Tuesdays** at 5:30-6:45pm in the Fellowship Hall. All levels from beginner to experienced are absolutely welcome. You can bring your own mat or borrow one of Jonah's. Following Yoga, there will be a Meditation time in the Nursery from 7-7:30pm. You can do one or both! Classes are free but donations are gratefully accepted for FCCEJ.



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. All women of the church are invited to join us for interesting programs and wonderful fellowship. Please join us on **Saturday, November 17 at 9:30** in Marvin Lounge. Bring a baby or childhood picture of yourself and tell us what you remember about that time in your life. Come and be a part of this supportive and caring group of women at FCCEJ.

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!



Hangin' the Greens & Advent Craft

Sunday, November 18th ~ following 2nd service ~ 11:30am to 1pm

Church decorating and an Advent craft. Two great fun things together! Bring a dish to share on Sunday the 18th and join CE and the Deacons for a time of fellowship and lunch following the 2nd service in the Fellowship Hall. We will then continue our time together decorating the Sanctuary and making one set to go with your nativity scene.



Family Nativity Sets



Starting November 4th, the nativity set and sign up will be in Fellowship Hall. Sign up for the year nativity set you would like to make or email Laurie so we have the right amount of materials on hand. This craft is fun for all ages! You will end up with a nativity set that you can keep adding on to for you own kids, grandkids, or pass it along as a great gift. Each year's set of figures is listed below. If this is your first year with us, sign up for year 1 so you leave with the first three pieces of the nativity ... Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. If this is your second year or more, sign up for the numbered year you wish to make. *Share a picture of your set with Laurie if you have one!*

Year 1 ~ Mary, Joseph & Baby Jesus; Year 2 ~ Angel, Donkey & Sheep; Year 3 ~ King, cow, Shepherd;
Year 4 ~ 2 Kings & a sheep; Year 5 ~ 3 camels

Wednesday, November 28th, Noontime Book Group *Note Date Change*

The Noontime Book Group will meet at 12:00 on Wednesday, November 28. We have changed to the fourth Wed. this month since the third Wednesday is the day before Thanksgiving. This month we are reading *Unveiled: The Hidden Life of Nuns* by Cheryl Reed. Ms. Reed is a journalist who became interested in getting beyond the stereotypes that both Protestants and Catholics have of these women who have dedicated their lives to God and the church. She interviewed over 300 nuns, living with them, praying with them, and getting to know them as individual people. Pastor Josh recommended this book to us, and has promised to join us for this discussion, if he can. Please join us for friendship, brown bag lunch and conversation about this book.



Ladies Crafting Time 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, November 28th** 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



Missions Moment

Many of us are familiar with House with Heart (formerly Ghar Sita Mutu) in Kathmandu, Nepal. We have written about House with Heart in previous newsletters. We wanted to remind the congregation that House with Heart is always in need of monetary donations. The Missions Committee gave \$500.00 to House with Heart this past June. “House with Heart is a charity that provides a home for abandoned children, an education center for impoverished women and children, and an outreach program for needy families. This non-profit organization was founded by Beverly Bronson in 2001, when she found two children huddled in front of a tin hut after being abandoned by their mother. Since then, House with Heart has built a facility that houses the children’s home and education center, and has continued to expand its outreach every year.” House with Heart’s programs include the following:

Children’s Home-for up to 30 children with “meals, education, enrichment activities and healthcare” provided. **Women’s Training Program**-teaches women to “learn new skills for growth and self-sufficiency” and a means to supplement their income. **Rise Above**-empowers Nepalese girls by providing “education and skills training leading to self-sufficiency and economic independence.” **Children’s Learning Centre**- “provides free schooling and tutoring for children whose families cannot afford to send them to school.” They also “provide scholarships, school supplies and uniforms to students in the community who attend full-time schools.” **Family Outreach Program**- “provide emergency and non-emergency help to families in need.” This year, House with Heart lost their founder, Beverly Bronson, to cancer. She passed away in May. Despite this, the organization has continued to do its amazing work. This year a second house was built! We encourage you all to go on the website www.housewithheart.org to read more about this organization. Thank you.

Dismas House ~ Your Good Deed Will be Much Appreciated

Across Vermont there are four Dismas Houses that provide shelter and support for men and women who have served prison terms and are making the transition from life in prison to life outside. For several years now, First Congregational Church members have been serving dinner on the 4th Wednesday of each month to the residents of the Dismas House in Winooski. Our participation in this program is of great value in lessening the feelings of estrangement that burden many who have served prison terms. The residents of Dismas House and the paid staff are friendly and appreciative of our help. The staff includes a paid Director and Associate Director who are at Dismas



House during weekdays, including during the evening meal. Three of our members prepare the fourth Wednesday dinner. One of us prepares an entry, another a salad, and a third, a dessert. After we’ve taken the food to Dismas house, we usually stay and enjoy the meal with the Dismas House residents and staff.

If you would like to volunteer for the Church’s Dismas House Mission, take a look at the sign-up sheet that’s on the bulletin board in the hall leading to the social hall. Questions? Please contact Ed Steele, the current facilitator for the Dismas House Mission if you have questions. His contact information is: (802)

871-5897 or edwardmsteele@msn.com



2019 Jamaica Team ~ Stock Sales Fundraiser

Our first fundraiser, “Stock” sales, has begun! Team members are now selling shares of stock to family, friends, and supporters. Each share costs \$25.00. Beginning October 28th, we will have a table on Sunday mornings between services and after the second service where you can learn about the Jamaica Mission Program and purchase stocks. This is a great way for members of the congregation to invest in this intergenerational, international service program. Talk with a team member or stop by the table and see us.

Team members are Mark & Nicholas Mendes, Rick & Sam Dooley, Caitlin & Kaki McGeary, Christine Czarny, Dave Dewey, Nolan Boerger, Emma Parker, Peter & Zachary Schmalz, Aliyah Watt, Carolyn Rushford and Sharon Dettenrieder.

Also, be sure to put March 9, 2019 on your calendar for our second fundraiser, the annual Calcutta event. This is the biggest fundraiser for the Jamaica program and lots of fun!!

Thank-you for your support!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop News

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

Mark these dates on your Calendar

Saturday November 3rd & 17th Shop Open from 9am to 1pm

Saturday November 10th Shop Open from 9 to 1 – Holiday Section will be ready

The shop is looking for donations of women’s winter coats & boots, Men’s winter hats/scarfs, women’s nightwear, men & women’s slippers, puzzles, utensils & dishes.

Donations are taken any time in our drop off box.



Heavenly Food Pantry

Next Heavenly Food Pantry days are Monday, November 12th, 5:30-7:30pm and Thursday, November 15th, 2-6pm

We are in need of boxed mac n’ cheese and sample size toothpaste tubes. They are perfect to give out with a toothbrush. Please ask your dentist the next time you have your teeth cleaned if they would donate a case!



10th Anniversary ~ Five Corners Christmas Craft Fest

Saturday, November 10th 9am -3pm

Mark your calendar for this big holiday event! To make this event a success at our church your assistance with the following would be greatly appreciated:

Nearly New - The following is a quick list of best sellers:

- Books;
- Holiday items especially Christmas;
- Frames;
- Games;
- Dishes
- Accessories – Scarfs, purses and jewelry – Last year we made over \$350 on these items

Sweet Shoppe– Best sellers are Maple Fudge, Peanut Brittle, Pecan Pies, Sugared Cranberries, ginger cookies, peanut butter fudge and baked beans. We really would appreciate items can be dropped at the church from **9 am to 6 pm on Friday Nov 9th in the Nursery.**

Silent Auction: In Memory of our dear friend Diana Higgins. Let's make it the best ever!

Ideas:

- Donating Tickets to a theater, arts or sporting event
- Giving golf/tennis lessons
- Baking a cookie/pie/cake/bread of the month,
- Making a homemade dinner
- Sewing/babysitting/cleaning/yard work
- Original Artwork
- Homemade quilt

We can pick up donated items, make gift certificates for you, give tax receipts, and more. Please drop off at the Church office **before Friday, November 9th**

Heavenly Spirit Café: Please assist by making homemade soups, macaroni and cheese, and chili. Also, consider donating a case of water, soda or paper products. Please make sure the donations are marked craft fest when left in the kitchen. You will have opportunity to sign up for takeout.

Decorators: Volunteers are needed **Sunday Nov 4th from noon to 2 pm** to decorate Marvin Lounge and our upstairs hallways. We'll need help again on **Friday Nov 9th 2 pm to 4 pm** to decorate Fellowship Hall. Join us anytime.

Greeters: We especially need volunteers to help all our wonderful shoppers navigate our church. Please consider signing up for a 2 hour shift.

Shoppers: Please come with friends and family. It's a great place to have lunch and do Christmas shopping.

Setup/Cleanup: We need help with setting up table Friday morning and cleanup on Saturday afternoon. The committee will have signup sheets after first service and second service for making a donation or signing up to volunteer at one of our amazing areas. We are asking all the volunteers to park in the doctor's office across the street from the church. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Linda Bogardus at 872-8972 or lbogardus@myfairpoint.net.

Thank you to everyone for your support from Linda Bogardus, Ann Gray, Maureen McKenzie, Cathy Shearer, Elaine Raymond, Phyllis Willey, Val Gabert and Mary Gratton.

Got Coats?



Winter Coat Drive – Donations by Nov. 11th for Nov. 15th Food Pantry

A Winter Coat Drive is currently underway to include coats, snowsuits, snowpants, hats, mittens, scarves, and boots for children and adults. This winter gear will be distributed at the Heavenly Food Pantry on November 15th, as well as to the men who live at the Dismas House in Burlington. We ask that the winter gear is clean and in good repair not to include sweaters or other winter clothing. We would like to receive all donations by Nov 11th, so that we have time to organize them prior to pantry day.

Please drop donations in the box in the hallway of the administrative offices marked 'Winter Coat Drive'.

Please contact Sue Conti at sueconti@comcast.net if you have any questions. Thank you so much for your support of this program and for helping our neighbors in need.

FCCEJ Volunteer Trip to the Vermont Food Bank in Barre!

A great chance for volunteer work for the holidays! You are invited to volunteer on **Saturday, December 1, 2018 from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm** for a food sort-a-thon at the Vermont Food Bank in Barre, Vermont. We have openings for 12-16 people, 14+. This is a popular volunteer activity at First Church because volunteers report that they enjoy getting so much volunteering done in a short period of time. This volunteer activity is a fast paced sort-a-thon where we fill boxes with food for senior citizens, although we occasionally help with other activities. Those who choose to carpool will meet at First Church at 6:45 AM and return by about 1:00 pm. The Food Bank provides coffee and snacks during the break. We hope you'll help Vermonters in need! Email Cynthia Kelley cynthiak222@gmail.com for the sign up link and more details or questions on this activity.



OUR CHURCH FAMILY



November 11th ~ Rite Aid Flu Shot Clinic, between 1st & 2nd Service
Come between services and get your flu shot here at FCCEJ!

November Birthdays

1st Catherine McMaster 2nd Benjamin Birmingham 3rd Peter Frankenburg, Ginger Irish
4th Tim Carney, Anne Harris 5th Marilyn Hyde, Malcolm Levanway 8th Heather Benton, Holly Bickford Ashe 9th Judy Allen, Lew Buchspics, Erik Frivoll 10th Kathy Mertens 11th Conor Gabert, Marya Lowe 12th Holly McClintock 14th Frank Smith 15th Troy Chipman, Sally Turner 18th Mary-Ellen Grove 20th Kevin Parks 21st Wendy Wark, Maura Willey 22nd Edward Owens 23rd Aaron Gorniak 24th Jessica Moos, Jamie Shearer 26th Beth Poratti, Sandy Tallman 27th Rich Celia 28th Linda Dean 29th Jina Cate, Adelaide Stein



Dear Church Family, Thank you for the lovely yellow rose!
It is brightening up my table!
Joyce Jacobs



Thank you to all the helping hands that helped with this year's Halloween Party! Hope you all had a great time! Many thanks to those who stayed to help clean up. Blessings!

Hello All, For those who are not on Facebook, I made it to NC all in one piece. I now have a job working the front desk at one of the PIVOT Physical Therapy locations! I'm even on the road now-you heard right-licensed driver right here!!! Now that I'm driving, the hunt for a church down here can begin. There are many I have seen,

so I have a list to check out. They have a LOT to live up to since FCCEJ is one of my favorite places in the world (and I've traveled a lot!). I love you all and can't wait to see y'all when I come home for a visit.

Love, Trista



First Congregational Church of EJ
1 CHURCH STREET
ESSEX JCT, VT 05452
Phone: 802-878-5745
Fax: 802-872-8236
Email: welcome@fccej.org
www.fccej.org

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BURLINGTON, VT 05401

PERMIT #598

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

Please help us clean up our mailing list! If you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, or would like to receive it electronically instead, simply:

- E-mail an “unsubscribe” message to welcome@fccej.org , OR
- Phone us at 802-878-5745, OR
- Mail this page back to us at the address above

Inside...

News From Your Pastor
Special Services & Events in November
Associate Pastor News
Laurie’s Lens
Deacon’s Corner
Music
Save The Dates

Stewardship
Children, Youth & Families
Fellowship & Learning
Mission Opportunities
Volunteer Opportunities
Our Church Family