

“The Good News” Church Events

Spring Summer 2017

**First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
at 10 Station Rd in Hartland, Vermont 05048**

website: www.hartlandcongregationalchurch.org

Church Facebook page: www.facebook.com/HartlandCongregationalChurch
Church Telephone: (802)436-2224

Dear Church Family –

I am glad that despite the rain, the birds persist in singing. However, I am a bit worried about the birds who decided that the end of the gutter on our barn was a good place for a nest. I worry that they have gotten rather wet in the recent downpours! We have a pair of cardinals flashing through the back yard with regularity as well. What birds have you spotted recently? Though I would like it, I don't feed the birds because of neighborhood cats who, I fear, would take advantage of the opportunity for some easy hunting. Did you know that in the bible there are a number of birds mentioned? Consider the Birds by Debbie Blue, is a fascinating and provocative look at these biblical birds. Inspired by this book, throughout the summer we will enjoy a preaching series based on the various birds mentioned in scripture. AND we will have many special Sundays: the return of Bruce & Caleb Freeberg to lead a Bluegrass Gospel Music Service, guest musician Janet Hewes, the Church Picnic, plus two Combined services with our dear neighbors in ministry – the First Universalist Society of Hartland plus we have some guest preachers as well! And of course, lots to do in addition to worship services. Please see this newsletter for plans to participate in OLD HOME DAY, the LOCAL MISSION TRIP and A FAMILY DAY as well as other summer events. Hope to see YOU in Church this summer. - Lucia

Worship Schedule

*Sunday, June 11th 10:00 Worship with Communion

*Sunday, June 18th 10:00 Worship – Last Choir Sunday - come and thank the choir for months of beautiful music!

*Sunday, June 25th **11:00 Worship & Church Picnic at Frazer's Home** please bring chairs, eating utensils, potluck picnic food & swim suits! Worship will be led by the Board of Deacons.
NOTE TIME: 11:00 on Rte 12, 5th house on right after Damon Hall.

*Sunday, July 2nd **10:00 Old Home Day Combined Service at the First Universalist Society of Four Corners (UU)**. Special Music: Combined Choir. NOTE Place & time!

*Monday, July 3rd 6:30 **Old Home Day Preparations** – join us at the church to finalize plans for OHD (food prep and parade prep!)

*Tuesday, July 4th **Old Home Day Parade and Festivities**

Summer Worship Time: 9:30 beginning July 9th

*Sun, July 9th 9:30 Worship with Communion, Special music: tba

*Sun, July 16th 9:30 Worship, Special music: Janet Hewes

*Sunday, July 23rd **9:30 Worship, Special Music Service with Bruce & Caleb Freeberg** – Come sing and listen to spirituals and gospel music from the Celtic, Appalachian, Country and Bluegrass traditions!!

*Sun, July 30th – 9:30 Combined Worship Service to Celebrate Youth Mission Trip (here). *Welcome Back Ginny!*

*Sun, Aug 6th 9:30 Worship with Communion **Family Day Event**

*Sun, Aug 13th 9:30 Worship, Rev Constance Moser preaching

*Sun, Aug 20th 9:30 Worship, Daun Smith preaching

*Sun, Aug 27th 9:30 Worship

*Sun, Sept 3rd 9:30 Worship with Communion

Worship Time returns to 10:00 after Labor Day Weekend.

Board of Christian Education News & Notes

From Director of Christian Education Mary Jo Ramsey:

When I accepted the position of Christian Ed Director, I was pretty sure I could easily develop a curriculum for Sunday School. Lucia DID point out, however, that the most difficult part of the job for ME would likely be calling people and asking them to volunteer. I knew she was right. But when I made that first call the person said yes. The second person also said yes. And the third person. By the end of that day, I had a team of volunteers for the Sundays from September through December! Helpful people said YES! When it was time to set-up for the ice cream social. When I was away and asked for 2 volunteers, these wonderful people said YES! When we needed extra help for special celebrations in church, these generous people said YES! If I needed a substitute volunteer, these dedicated people said YES! When I asked for someone to be available for nursery care, these kind people said YES! They said YES to a program aimed at “growing the Church” through young families. They said YES and gave their time and passion to the youngest members of our church. I hope you share my gratitude and appreciation for these volunteers. Without their commitment, I would not have been able to help do the important work of sharing God’s word with our children. Our amazing volunteers were: Sue Reilly, Donna Bowers, Bonnie Reynolds, Carol Withington, Carol Mowry, Gabby Mowry, Jeanne Frazer, Sherri & Darryl Calkins, Lori Hampton, Carol Williams, Silvia Hale, Sara White, Emma Allegretti, Katlyn White and Rhonda Summarsell. Thank you, all of you! It has been a fantastic year, and I am also making big plans for next year!

NEWS FLASH/SAVE THE DATE: We are making plans for a special Family day following church on Sunday August 6! More details as they evolve!

MUSIC NEWS

Thank you to the Choir for your hours and hours of volunteer time!

Your music sings the praises of our hearts, lifts our souls and speaks to us and for us in ways that words can not. Our worship service is so much richer for your sharing of your time and talent.

Thank you to Becky & Clydene for your leadership and devotion to our church music program.

AND THANK YOU to the AWE – SOME Ginny!

Every week you play beautiful preludes and postludes and introit and anthems and offertories and hymns and service music.

You are a wonder!

CHOIR SCHEDULE

Thursday, June 15th at 5:00 – Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, June 18th – Last regular Sunday Choir (until Sept)

Thursday, June 29th at 7:00 – Choir Rehearsal at the First Universalist Society of Hartland (UU)

to prepare for the Combined Service on

July 2nd - Old Home Day Combined Service (at the UU)

From the Altar Committee Anyone with flowers to share on Sunday Morning, please let us know. It’s fun to have a variety of gardens represented throughout the summer. We would even pick up and deliver!

-Martha McGlenn, Emily Silver, Linda Genovese

Board of Missions & Outreach

Please support our church's outreach to the community and beyond.

Non-perishable food donations are always welcome for the Hartland Food Shelf and can be dropped off here anytime.

Garden produce may be donated to the food shelf at the UU in 4 Corners on Fridays 8:00 – 10:00am.

July 10th – 14th Local Adult Mission Trip with Habitat for Humanity working in Claremont You can work one day, two days or all week or offer to serve lunch! Sign ups to follow. Please email Lucia if interested!

July 23rd – July 30th Youth Mission Trip to New Haven, CT.

June & July - Mission Trip food donations

- Back to School Backpacks for PINS & HES - school supplies & backpacks (due by Aug 6th for blessing at worship)

- Church World Service School Kits (our goal is 30 kits) (You are invited to donate any portion of the School kit)

To assemble a School Kit you will need:

- One pair of blunt metal scissors (rounded tip)
- Three 70-count spiral notebooks or notebooks totaling 200-210 pages (no loose-leaf or filler paper)
- One 30-centimeter ruler (12")
- One hand-held pencil sharpener
- One large eraser
- Six new pencils with erasers
- One box of 24 crayons (only 24)

One 12" x 14" to 14" x 17" finished size cotton or lightweight canvas bag with cloth handles. (Please, no reusable shopping bags – there is a pattern for these bags on the CWS website <http://www.cwsglobal.org/resources/pdfs/school-bag-pattern.pdf>)

August 29th - Hixon House Dinner **TEAM LEADERS NEEDED** – please contact Carol Withington or sign up on the bulletin board if interested Those who have prepared and served meals at the Hixon House experience a great blessing in the act of service. We need team leaders for August 29th and October 31st. Team Leaders plan the meal and recruit the volunteers (usually a team of 4 or 5 is enough).

Youth Mission Trip Update: July 23rd – July 30th 2017

We have 15 youth & 9 adults participating in Mission Trip 2017 to New Haven, CT where we will spend 5 days working with various service organizations in New Haven: Christian Community Action, New Reach, & Habitat for Humanity

As in previous years, we are asking for food donations. You can find a food list at either this church or the UU church.

Thank you to the many generous individuals who supported our fundraising brunches!

Your financial support, food support and generosity are greatly appreciated. Please keep us in your prayers for a safe and productive trip.

OLD HOME DAY!!

Join us to march in the Old Home Day Parade & for the Field Festivities!

We have a community and ministry to celebrate! Join us to sell some food, play games and share some of the excitement of being this church – worship services, youth group, Habitat projects, Hixon House, bible study, Church School, music, fellowship, laughter, peace, comfort, belonging, Grace for the journey.

Contact Kristi White (kristi.l.white@gmail.com) to volunteer an hour either on the 4th or to help with prep.

*Monday, July 3rd 6:30 **Old Home Day Preparations** – join us at the church to finalize plans for OHD (food prep & parade prep!)

*Tuesday, July 4th **Old Home Day Parade and Festivities**

*TO Wear on Old Home Day: Lucia will be ordering a new batch of **“Be the Church” tshirts**. Email me if you want one by June 18th (aqua blue shirts will be 100% cotton, with our church name on front and the “Be the church” logo on the back). Each shirt costs \$12.00, please order a size and prepay for the shirts.*

First Congregational Church of Hartland, UCC
PO Box 454,
Hartland, Vermont 05048

Showing Up by Molly Baskette

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God." - Ephesians 2:19-21

I can't tell you how often people are absent from church for a while, then come back, and when they pass through the receiving line at church say sheepishly, "Sorry I haven't been here - I've been bad." They seem to expect disapproval or punishment. In 16 years of ministry, I still haven't quite figured out what to say. I usually opt for the non-judgmental, compassionate cadence, "Of course not! We're not about guilt here! We'll be here whenever you need us!" But while this is true, there are a couple of problems with this response.

Maybe they need to be needed, and missed. Maybe they need to know there's something at stake in them not coming. That, if they are formal members, the promises they made to us mattered. And even if they are not formal members, *they* matter - that we notice when they are gone, and we are diminished by their absence.

Maybe they need to hear that if they do come more often, their life might just get better. I say *might* - churches are flawed institutions, and mine among them. But if you want to get wet, you have to get into the water. If you want grace, peace, hope, comfort, growth, you have to get into, or near, the people and places that have them.

What I want to say to people when they come before me and hang their heads is, "listen - you get out of it what you put into it." I can't say it, because it doesn't sound very pastoral, but really it's just a logic statement. You can't win if you don't play.

And God, though She rarely tells us this to our faces, needs us in church too. Some of us can only get the grace She wants to give us when we pass through that portal, into a sweet, slightly dusty, hardworking, authentic faith community. It's not that grace is unavailable elsewhere; it's just that - we're tuned to the right frequency when we're there together. Church is the structure in which Jesus is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, where we ourselves can become God's crib.

They say that 80% of life is just showing up, right?

Prayer I love you. And we are different. And that's just how God made us.