

The Steeple

Federated Church of Castleton
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November 2011

Notes from the Board of Deacons

At our last meeting in September we discussed several items of interest. Our meeting this month will not be held on second Tuesday of the month but rather on the Third Tuesday (November 15th). We plan on making a small reminder of Thanksgiving for our home bound members. It should be fun to do and also bring our fellowship to those at home who cannot attend church. Our other project concerns selling Rada Cutlery with the proceeds going to the Our Time, Our Turn fund. We have sold these kitchen items before with great success. The knives are wonderful and are very sharp. Pat and Bernie Jones have taken on this project for us. They have catalogues you can view and with Christmas approaching they make great gifts. See Pat and Bernie for the catalogue.

We certainly enjoyed our guest preachers when Rob was away. Thank you so much to Charlene Baird and Bob Grace (Amazing Grace) for their services. Welcome back Rob. We also have missed Nate for a couple of Sundays. He has been vacationing in California. Welcome back Nate.

Our Community Thanksgiving Service and Light Supper will be held on Tuesday, November 22nd. Church Service will be held at 6 p.m. with a light supper following. Come and join us at this special Service.

We will be starting a Pastoral Care Support Team in the near future. We will be calling on our homebound members, new members, hospitalized and rehab members and anyone in need of support in a difficult time. All members of the team will be recruited on a volunteer basis. If you wish to be a part of this group, please speak to Jean Britt (273.2311). We will meet in the beginning every week with the Pastor and then following our orientation meet every two weeks. It is a very important committee in the life of the church, reaching out to those in need.

Our prayer chain is still active and if you would like to be a member of that group call Jean Britt 273-2311. Following along those lines we ask for prayers for Norma Will who is recovering from her surgery and is back to work part time: Jean Sumner on the passing of his sister -in-law Gynthen: The family of Dot Burr on her passing: Martha Towers: Marianne Patch following her surgery and return to work; and Lloyd Whipple.

Don't forget our Community Thanksgiving Service - November 22nd 6 p.m.



Christmas Crafts Family Workshop

December 3, 2011

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



On December 3rd, the Christian Education Board invites you to a Christmas Crafts Family Workshop to celebrate the season of Advent.

The beginning of advent falls close to what is known in Europe as "St. Nicolas Day." This is the feast of the third century bishop who became known as the giver of gifts to those in need. Traditionally home-made gifts were exchanged among family and friends on December 6th to commemorate the generous spirit of this beloved saint and to be reminded of Jesus' words *it is more blessed to give than to receive*. In our age of consumerism, especially during the Advent season leading up to Christmas, we often forget that it is the simple gift of the heart that is really the most meaningful. We need to be reminded that Christmas comes every year to celebrate the greatest gift of all which was given to us---the gift of Love, the Christ Child.

We hope that this craft workshop for our church family and community members can be a time for sharing the gift of friendships and for creating gifts for loved ones with our own hands.

There will be an array of different crafts to choose from, mostly Christmas ornaments. Tables will be set up in the fellowship hall with an example for each craft and all the 'ingredients' necessary to create your own. You are invited to use your own imagination too! Please mark your calendars and save the date.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

- 11/4 Sheri Curtis
- 11/5 Debra Easton
- 11/6 Mary Ellen Barker
- 11/8 Donald Baker
- 11/10 Flora Maloney
- 11/11 Holly Hitchcock
- 11/12 Joseph Grey
- 11/16 Clarence Beayon Jr.
- 11/18 Keith Crossman
- 11/20 Colton Timmerman
- 11/22 Steve Taran
- 11/26 Joe Tomasi
- 11/28 Ben Hunt
- 11/29 Cathy Baker
- 11/29 Courtney Larson
- 11/30 Trenton Harvey

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO...

- 11/29 Brad and Ceil Hunt

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

11:00 WORSHIP SERVICE
(NURSERY AVAILABLE)

HOW TO CONTACT US

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Traveling Light

By Lynn Olcott

Ordinary Days

And from God's fullness we have all received grace upon grace.

John 1:16

Morning comes and I thank God for letting me live another day. The water for my shower is clean and hot and I don't have to carry it from somewhere else or find wood to heat it. On my pre-dawn drive to work, I meet no deer. I reach the parking lot and thank God for safe arrival. I ask God to accompany me through the day.

The workday is long and I am happy when I can go home. I walk to my car, breathing fresh air and feeling grateful for the work I have been able to do. I drive home slowly, appreciating the beauty of God's trees and fields and skies. My house welcomes me and I am glad. I thank God for my evening meal and for the evening. I fall asleep grateful for rest in a safe place.

God of all gifts, I hope I never take for granted the grace of ordinary days. Amen

Library News

Rev. Charlene Baird

I'd like to tell you about a very special book for the Christmas season. ***Esther's Gift*** by Jan Karon is a must-read during the season of giving. Esther Bolick is filled with the holiday spirit as she prepares to bake her annual batch of her famous orange marmalade cakes as gifts for her friends in Mitford.

When her husband calculates how much each cake costs, Esther has a difficult decision. Should she cut her list down and make fewer cakes? Esther finds out what the price of a gift really is.

The book is small but the message huge. Experience the joy of Mitford and maybe even make a cake from the recipe included.

Mission News

Thank you to everyone who participated in the **Fair Haven Area Crop walk**. We had 194 walkers and raised \$10,222.00. 25% of the money raised will come back to our local communities to support the food shelves in Fair Haven, Castleton and Poultney.

On Saturday November 5th, Jennifer Wright of the **Heal the Children Foundation** will be giving a presentation at Grace Church in Rutland (5pm dinner and program). She will be talking about her recent trip to Kenya and her work in starting an orphanage and school. For more information about her charity please visit her website: healthchildren-foundation.org

On Sunday November 13th we will be taking a good will offering for the **UCC Neighbor in Need fund**. This fund provides assistance to people in need here in the U.S.

A donation of \$500 from the mission fund was sent to **Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS**. This organization provides assistance to people in need and they also organize weekly work crews from UCC and other churches around the U.S. who go there to help rebuild and renovate homes including making handicap assessable repairs for elderly home owners. For more information please visit their website: backbaymission.org

In December, we will be sponsoring our yearly **Giving Tree** providing gifts to area seniors through the **SW Council on Aging**. The tree will be in the sanctuary from November 27th to December 11th. To participate please select a tag from the tree and bring back your wrapped gift (gift tag on the outside of the package) by Sunday, December 11th. For more information please contact Tamra.

Blue Spruce Home Project in Mt. Holly, Vermont – a group of volunteers has been working on developing a safe community for former female prisoners at the old Blue Spruce Inn on Route 155 in Mount Holly. The property was donated to the N.E. Lutheran Church and a separate charity called the **Blue Spruce House Project** was created. The house (with the help of many area non-profits) will be offering housing, counseling, job skills and educational support. The house will be open soon and will be able to house 10 residents initially with the hope of adding more beds as the program grows. For more information or ideas on how you can help contact Will Hunter at: bluesprucehouse@gmail.com. This organization is being supported by many Vermont churches including the Vermont UCC conference.

Thank you for your continued support - The Mission Committee

Bible Study on Satan, Demons, and Angels

Sunday, November 13 and 20 at 9:45 am

Walter Wink writes at the beginning of his book, *Unmasking the Powers*, "Nothing commends Satan to the modern mind. It is bad enough that Satan is spirit, when our worldview has banned spirit from discourse and belief. But worse, he is evil, and our culture resolutely refuses to believe in the real exist-ence of evil, preferring to regard it as a kind of systems breakdown that can be fixed with enough tinkering. Worse yet, Satan is not a very good intellectual idea. Once theology lost its character as reflection on the experience of *knowing* God, and became a second-level exercise in *knowing about*, the experiential ground of theology began to erode away. "Although mythologically true," Morton Kelsey writes, "the devil is intellectually indefensible, and once it was realized that the conception of the powers of evil was 'only' a representation of peoples' experience, no matter how accurate, the devil began to fade.

With only sense experience and reason to go on, and with no rational place for an evil first cause, enlightened people simply dropped the devil from consideration. With direct psychic experience no longer admissible as evidence of his reality, the devil was as good as dead.

Nor is this picture essentially altered by polls that show belief in Satan to be sharply on the increase. As we shall see later, such belief is most frequently a component of neurotic religion, and the remarkably subtle character of Satan is collapsed into a two-dimensional bogeyman that has only vague similarities with the biblical devil. The Satan image, even where it lingers on, has been whittled down to the stature of a personal being whose sole obsessions would seem to be with sexual promiscuity, adolescent rebellion, crime, passion, and greed. While not themselves trivial, these preoccupations altogether obscure the massive satanic evils that plunge and drive our times like a trawler before an angry sea. When television evangelists could try to terrorize us with Satan and then speak favorably of South African apartheid, we should have sensed something wrong. When the large evil went undetected, when the symbol no longer attracted to the fact, when evil ran roughshod through corporate boardrooms and even churches, unnoticed and unnamed, while "Satan" was relegated to superego reinforcement and moralistic scare tactics, then we should have caught the stench-not of brimstone, but of putrefaction. Not that we had progressed beyond evil. On the contrary, *the evil of our time had become so gigantic that it had virtually outstripped the symbol and become autonomous, unrepresentable, beyond comprehension.*"

Rev. Berry will reintroduce the Biblical idea of Satan and to a lesser degree angels and demons. As we uncover scripture we will ask questions on how Satan has been interpreted throughout the ages, including our present time, always returning to the Bible and the revelation disclosed by Jesus and the apostolic church.



Join Us...



...for our Raising Our World Event!

**Grace Congregational Church, Fellowship Hall
8 Court St. • Rutland, VT 05701
Saturday, November 5, 5:00 pm**

An interactive drum circle; silent auction of Kenyan crafts; a dinner; and a presentation by HEAL president Jennifer Wright. Come hear about her exciting trip to Africa, including the opening of the first HEAL orphanage!

- 5:00pm: Silent auction opens in Fellowship Hall.
- 5:15pm: Drum circle will begin. Join us for this fun activity for all ages. No skills necessary!
- 6:00pm: Dinner (Suggested donation of \$10)
- 6:30pm: Presentation by Jennifer Wright

The drum circle will be facilitated by Otha Day of Drum to the Beat. For more information please visit: <http://www.drumtothebeat.com>

All proceeds from this event will go to support the development of a secondary school and orphanage in rural Kenya. For more information about HEAL the Children Foundation, Inc. please visit: <http://www.healthechildrenfoundation.org>.



Return Service Requested

Visit us at: <http://www.castletonchurch.org>

Castleton VT 05735

504 Main Street

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Federated Church of Castleton

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CASTLETON, VT

Community Thanksgiving Service

All Welcome

Tuesday, November 22, 6:00 PM

On Tuesday, November 23, the 4th Annual Community Thanksgiving Service will be held at the Federated Church of Castleton at 6 PM. This is an inter-faith service and everyone is asked to bring a non-perishable food item as your offering for the Castleton Cares Foodshelf. Following the service, a light supper will be served, hosted by the Federated Church.



This is a great time for our friends and neighbors to get together to share a time of worship and refreshments.

Happy Thanksgiving!