

The Steeple

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March/April 2011

LENTEN STUDIES— Wednesday Nights— March 16 through April 6

ECUMENICAL SERVICES Wednesdays, March 16 and March 23 at St. Mary's School

We'll begin the Lenten Season by participating in two ecumenical services on Wednesday, March 16 and 23. Our clergy and deacons plan on attending and encourage you to attend if you possibly can.

"From Strangers to Friends" Steps and Skills to engage newcomers and longtime friends of the church into a deeper level of community will be the subject of the two Lenten Potluck Suppers and Services -St. Mary's School, 6:00pm potluck supper, beverages, silverware and plates provided. Please bring food to share. **6:45** Community prayer and worship; **7:00-7:45** If you are thinking about being a Real Church Friend to new folks, please come and eat, learn and practice the skills that will help you be comfortable in integrating new friends in our church family, AND make some new friends! Participating churches include the Fair Haven Methodist, Catholic, Episcopal and UCC Church as well as Castleton Federated Church! Worship time will be led by the Rev. Jim Lawrence. The two workshops will be led by the Rev. Marsh Hudson-Knapp who has thirty years' experience leading trainings in Calling and Caring Skills.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY WITH REV BERRY Wednesdays, March 30, April 6, and April 13 at 6:00pm at Federated Church
The Board of Christian Education invites you to attend a Lenten Study offered by the Rev. Dr. Steve Berry The Classes will begin with a simple meal of soup and bread and will conclude at 7:30pm. (If you would like to help with a contribution of soup or bread one of these nights, let Rev. Berry know.)

CONFRONTING THE POWERS THAT BE: BIBLICAL INSIGHTS ON JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION AND WHAT THEY MEAN FOR US TODAY.

For the past year Dr. Berry has been working with theologian Walter Wink on Wink's latest book tentatively titled, *Just Jesus*. Wink is Professor Emeritus of Biblical Interpretation at Auburn Theological School in New York City. Wink is the author of an award-winning trilogy: *Naming the Powers*, *Unmasking the Powers* and *Engaging the Powers*. His book, *Jesus' Third Way*, was made available surreptitiously to 3,200 pastors (both black and white) during apartheid in South Africa. Wink is attributed with having had a major influence and impact on Jesus' non-violent way that shook that country to its core.

Dr. Berry will share some of the biographical information on Walter Wink's life and thought. He will then delve into some of the scripture passages that may help us unmask the Powers that were behind Jesus' crucifixion, how those powers have operated from time immemorial and how Jesus exposed them. "Wink's understanding of the Domination System and the Invisible Powers That Determine Human Existence are important to understand" states Berry. "If we wish to deal with the problem of evil and why things are as they are and where God is in the mix, then hopefully, the class will offer some talking points and discussion opportunities. The hope is that through the study of scripture and dialogue we will seek to engage in deeper inquiry about God's presence in our life and in the life of the world."

The Domination System as defined by Walter Wink is a world-encompassing system characterized by unjust relations and the use of violence to maintain them. Wink states that it was the Domination System that Jesus came to confront and that Jesus offered in place of the Domination System an alternative and new reality, which Jesus called, the Kingdom of God. Jesus' ministry "attempts to establish a beachhead for a new reality," writes Wink.

Wink's thought are particularly important given what is happening in the Arab world.

Join us for this Lenten study. *Those who wish can purchase a copy of The Powers That Be, based upon the trilogy. We will place an order for a book for you, but you will need to place your order in the office by Friday, March 11.*

HAPPY MARCH & APRIL BIRTHDAYS TO...

- 3/4 Erin Spaulding
- 3/4 Ray McLaughlin
- 3/5 Debbie Larson
- 3/8 Doris Thomas
- 3/9 Samantha Murphy
- 3/9 Gibbs Rehlen
- 3/11 Patricia Varga
- 3/18 Bernard Jones
- 3/18 Noah Ramey
- 3/20 Jacob Taran
- 3/21 Joshua Beayon
- 3/25 Scott Dimick
- 3/28 Dillon Coltey
- 4/4 Pam Rehlen
- 4/5 Austin Beayon
- 4/5 Gregory Taggart
- 4/5 Richard Ramey
- 4/5 Jordyn Howard
- 4/7 Hillary Ward
- 4/10 Nate De Young
- 4/11 Isabelle Tolnes
- 4/13 Wenger Rehlen
- 4/15 John Rehlen
- 4/19 Barbara Prunier
- 4/19 Liam Tomasi
- 4/20 Mary Nichols
- 4/21 Sovay McGalliard
- 4/21 John Durfee Jr.
- 4/23 Gerald Fenton
- 4/25 Amy Whipple
- 4/26 Nicole Blackwood
- 4/27 Craig Britt
- 4/29 Joseph Durfee

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO...

- 3/30 Dan & Lisa Beayon
- 3/31 Amy & Lloyd Whipple
- 4/9 April & Dana Sloan
- 4/21 Bonnie & Keith Crossman



Lois Ladd Honored

At the Castleton Town Meeting February 28, 2011, Lois Ladd was honored with loud applause and a plaque which reads: ***"On behalf of the Town of Castleton, for thirty years of unselfish and dedicated service to our residents in need in administering help through the Castleton Foodshelf, we offer this symbol of deep appreciation and thanks to Lois Ladd"***

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

9:45 SUNDAY SCHOOL
(PRESCHOOL—GRADE 6)

11:00 WORSHIP SERVICE
(NURSERY AVAILABLE)

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MARCH LAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

Deacon of the Month—Cindy Williams

Date	Liturgist	Usher/Greeter	Trustee Assisting in Audit
3/6/11	Winfred Pike	Ruth and Lloyd Whipple	Winfred Pike
3/13/11	Holly Hitchcock	Deb Larson-greeter Ray Ladd-usher	Norm Williams
3/20/11	Ceil Hunt	Mary Ellen Barker –greeter	Ray Ladd
3/27/11	Brad Hunt	Flora Maloney Vicki Mulholland	Lloyd Whipple
Coffee Hour Hostesses	Deb Larson	Cindy Williams	

APRIL LAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

Deacon of the Month—Patricia Varga

Date	Liturgist	Usher/Greeter	Trustee Assisting in Audit
4/3/11	Tamra Staudter	Ruth and Lloyd Whipple	John Rehlen
4/10/11	Larry Douglass	Norm and Cindy Williams	Winfred Pike
4/17/11	Brad Hunt	Pat and Bernie Jones	Norm Williams
4/24/11 Easter Sunday	Jean Britt	Deb Larson Vicki Mulholland	Ray Ladd
Coffee Hour Hostesses	Holly Hitchcock	Tamra Staudter	Lloyd Whipple

Entering Lent with some thoughts to Ponder Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom

Rev. Steve Berry

Jesus' proclamation was that the kingdom of God was at hand. In the beginning of Mark's Gospel for example, he comes "to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe the good news.'" This proclamation of the kingdom is the framework in which Jesus' entire message, his ministry of healing, his relation to Old Testament law, his calling of the disciples, and the conflicts which led to his death must be understood. Theoretical anthropologist Rene Girard sees Jesus' message about the kingdom as the key to interpreting all Scripture. According to Girard, Jesus' message, particularly in the Sermon on the Mount, combines a new worldview and a new ethic. A new kind of conduct is required from humans because of the way God acts toward them. Because God as Father sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous, Jesus' followers are called to love their enemies and to pray for those who persecute them. This parallel between a new ethic and a new revelation about the nature and behavior of God echoes throughout the Sermon on the Mount. "If you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not the gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect," (Matt. 5:47-48).

Jesus is teaching not only a new ethic but also a new experience and message about God. Jesus addresses God as "Abba," the heavenly Father who shows compassion to all. Jesus' experience of God as Abba has significant ramifications for the way he relates to those around him, and for the kind of relationship to which he calls his followers. This new experience of God is the basis for Jesus' relationship with tax-gatherers, sinners, and outcasts. His experience and proclamation of God as a God of love and unconditional forgiveness are the basis for his authority to forgive sins.

The Sermon on the Mount also uncovers human sinfulness as a latent will to violence. In the saying about adultery (Matt. 5:27-28) for example, Jesus shows that evil begins in the sphere of desire. Furthermore, in passages such as Matthew 5:38, he calls people beyond what Rene Girard calls the mimetic principle. "You have heard that it was said, 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth...But I say...do not resist the evildoer.'" In other words, don't imitate, but instead act in a way that breaks the cycle of imitation. Desire, mimesis, and violence, as well as their

countermeasure presented here by Jesus, correspond to Girard's view of the nature of evil and how it acts in human relations.

It is also important, especially in a Western context, to emphasize that the message of the kingdom is not only to individuals. Jesus seeks to gather a new people of God as an essential part of the kingdom coming near. In Matthew 9:35-36, Jesus, seeing the crowd, has compassion for them. He tries to gather this harassed and scattered people who are like sheep without a shepherd. His calling of the twelve symbolizes a prophetic calling of a new Israel, and he sends them out to minister to villages rather than to individuals (Luke 9).

Furthermore, the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples also assumes that the Father is not only "my Father," but "our Father," the Father of the whole people. This emphasis on community becomes even clearer when we see the prayer that invokes the Father's name to be hallowed and that the Father's kingdom come against the backdrop of Ezekiel 36:22-32, where these petitions involve gathering a people who will represent God's name among the nations. The Sermon on the Mount is thus intended to describe the distinctive conduct of a new people of God and demonstrate how the evils that have plagued the history of Israel, and in fact all human history, might be overcome.

At the same time, the gathering of a people includes the repentance and faith of individuals. Repentance is part of the proclamation of the kingdom. And many healing stories note the faith of individuals which helped make their healing possible (Mark 5:34, 10:52; Luke 7:50, 17:19). The opposite was also true: where there was no faith, Jesus was unable to do miracles (Mark 6:5). The gathering of a community does not undermine but supports the call to repentance and faith of the individual.

What happened, however, was that his message of the kingdom and Jesus' gathering of a people provoked a countermovement. The opposition, led by some of the Jewish leaders, tried to unite the people against Jesus, his message of the heavenly Father who loves his enemies, and his movement to gather a new people to God. Jesus himself acknowledged this countermovement as he wept over Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37).

HOLY WEEK AT A GLANCE

PALM SUNDAY, April 17

The entire church is invited to a breakfast that will be from 9:30am to 10:30am. Details are to be worked out but a delicious meal is in store. Come, bring your family members, and then let's go upstairs and worship God together.

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 21

We will be having a special service at 7:30pm in remembrance of the Last Supper/Tenebrae Service.

GOOD FRIDAY, April 22

The church will be open from noon to 3:00pm for those who would like to come for meditation, reflection, and prayer.

EASTER SUNDAY, April 24

At 7:00am we will have a service at the bridge leading into the Castleton Cemetery. This service will be led by the Deacons. Then at 11:00am we will have our special Easter service in the sanctuary. There will be no Sunday school that day.

EASTER PLANTS, MEMORIALS, AND CELEBRATIONS

We are pleased to offer you several opportunities for remembrance at Easter. In addition to the traditional Easter lilies, we will also have potted tulips, hyacinths, cyclamen, and daffodils. We will again have our Lily Cross made up of individual lilies. Please use the form below to order your plants or individual lilies. Easter is April 24, so please get your request in by April 13. List of names for memorial and celebration plants will be included in the bulletin on Easter. Please print or type all information on the form below and drop off at the church with cash or check made out to: Federated Church of Castleton Flower Fund or mail to:

Shirley Beayon
305 Birdseye Road
Castleton VT 05735

Lois Ladd
PO Box 21
Castleton VT 05735

I would like to order (@\$10 each):

____ Lilies ____ Cyclamen ____ Hyacinths ____ Tulip plant ____ Daffodil plant

I would like to order _____ lily(ies) (for the Lily Cross) @ \$3.00 each

In Loving Memory of _____

In Celebration of _____

From _____

____ I will pick up my plant(s) on Easter following worship service

____ Please deliver to a shut-in of the Flower Committee's choice

____ I will leave my plants (s) to decorate the sanctuary

Total Amount enclosed \$ _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Traveling Light

By Lynn Olcott

Plans

For I know the plans I have for you, plans for welfare and not evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah 29:11

I drive a lot and this week's audio book was a nine-disc description of research about maintaining positive thoughts and emotions as we go through life. It was not new material, and the theories and conclusions were brimming with common sense. Still, it was affirming to hear it from someone else's context, in someone else's words. Not surprisingly, spending time outdoors in the sunshine increases our positivity ratio. So do such things as performing kind acts, applying skills in a new way and savoring happy (rather than distressing) memories.

One piece of advice in particular stuck in my mind. We should imagine and envision the best possible outcomes for the future. According to several studies, when we mentally anticipate happy endings for our projects and longings, large and small, it has the affect of improving mental and physical health, especially if it is done consistently over time. That seems like really good news, doesn't it? It pays to be optimistic about the future! Imagine that.

God of all times and places, I trust in your plans. Amen

LIBRARY NEWS

Rev. Charlene Baird

My suggestion for reading this month is a book which changed the world. It is filled with mystery and romance. The characters in the story are brave and determined. They are committed to changing the minds of the people they meet daily. Maybe they hope to change the dangerous world that surrounds them. Basically it is the story of one person who did change the history of the world. A man of humble beginnings who with a few friends in just three years effected the lives of millions in the centuries ahead.

The book of course is the BIBLE! The suggested reading is the Gospel of Matthew. In your reading of this book you too may find your life changed. Enjoy the Greatest Book Ever Written.

Also, I recommend, *PRAYING WITH THE EARTH: A PRAYER BOOK FOR PEACE* by John Philip Newell, a book of prayers for morning and evening each day of the week. There are devotions which celebrate the spiritual legacy shared by Jews, Christians and Muslims which articulate the longings for peace close to the heart of all of these traditions, in spite of their divisions. Included are devotions such as readings from the Psalms, Gospel of Matthew and the Qur'an. It can be purchased from Hopkins Bookshop (Burlington) in April for \$18. Or encourage the library to purchase it for circulation.

Charlene

MISSION NEWS

Thank you for the generous donations received on February 6th (on Souper Bowl Sunday) for the Castleton Cares food shelf. We raised \$178.25 plus many canned food items.

On Tuesday, March 15th at 6:30 pm the Mission Committee will be meeting at church. We are looking to have two people join our committee. If you are interested please either plan to attend the meeting or contact Tamra at 468-5453.

The Dismas House of Vermont is working hard to open another house in Hartford (White River Junction). The board is going through the approval process with the Dept. of Corrections. The plan is to open the house sometime this year though a specific date has not been set yet. The organization will be looking for donations to furnish the house – twin bed frames and mattresses, small dressers, twin sheets, blankets and towels. They might also need kitchen items. Terese Black at the Rutland Dismas House is coordinating and storing the items until the house is open. For more information please see Tamra.

Upcoming event – in April we will be taking a good will offering for the UCC/UMC One Great Hour of Sharing fund.

The Mission Committee

– Lois Ladd, Vicki Mulholland, Aleda Dutton and Tamra Staudter

DEACON NEWS

APPETIZERS ANYONE?

Thanks to all who have sent in recipes and continue to send them in. We are getting close to the number of recipes that we want. We still need appetizer recipes. I only have 2 or 3 of those. If you haven't given me a recipe yet I would appreciate it if you would. We would like one from every member of the congregation. Cindy Williams

NEWS FROM NATE AND THE MUSIC PROGRAM

The Junior Choir will be providing music for the service on March 13. I'll be away March 21-April 16 (editor's note: Rob will be substitute organist on March 27) . We're planning great music for the Easter service. We will have the Choir, Junior Choir, and bells and probably some English horn and percussion too! We're all working hard to get it ready, so we hope it will be great.

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

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PERMIT #4
CASTLETON, VT

Roast Pork Dinner
Saturday, April 2, 5:00—6:30

On Saturday, April 2 folks at the Federated Church of Castleton will be serving up a traditional roast pork dinner with all the fixings. Serving will be continuous from 5:00 to 6:30.

Why not invite a group of friends to fill a table?
Make your own dinner party and let us do the work!
Sounds like a win, win situation.

Proceeds benefit the church *Our Time, Our Turn* campaign.