

The United Church of Strafford News

PO Box 124 • Strafford, VT • 05072 • 802-765-4585

Located on the Strafford Green, 230 Justin Morrill Hwy, Sunday services at 10 a.m.

Summer 2016

Mark Your Calendar!

Summer Events:

Lynn's Office Hours – Thursday June 23, 3-7 pm; Wed. June 29, 3-7 pm. (July and August to be determined)

Burden's Vow Renewal Service – Sunday, June 19th at noon after an extended coffee hour

Nancy Gerlach's Memorial Service – Saturday, June 25, 2:00 pm

Mission Sunday – July 24 with guest Wanda Salter, missionary traveling to Kenya

Rummage Sale – August 4-6 at Barrett Hall – start collecting now!

Just a reminder – if you desire a visit with Pastor Lynn or the deacons, please call the church, or email Lynn at lynn.wickberg@gmail.com or call her at the parsonage number: 765-2710 or reach out to the Deacons and they will direct you to appropriate support.

On-Line...

unitedchurchstr.wix.com/unitedchurchstr#
FACEBOOK - @UCStrafford

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Music Notes

We hope to be announcing soon the addition to our staff of a new music director, beginning in August, with a special focus on developing a children's music program coming in the fall. More to follow! This will be in large part thanks to an anonymous donation to cover this two-year effort. If you would like to make a special donation to the Music Fund, simply add "Music Fund" in the memo line of your donation.

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The "Ordinary" Season

Wow! In our last newsletter we were preparing for the Lenten season, Holy Week, and Easter. During those seasons of the church year, we have journeyed through many aspects of life, and dying, and resurrection hope together. We rejoiced with the 90+ year olds of the Strafford community as they shared living history with us. We mourn the passings and give thanks for the lives of dear ones, far and near, including Nancy, Sheila, Ned, and Pat. We honor the work of the

settled pastor search committee on behalf of the church as they composed the profile that will be used to help in connecting the United Church of Strafford with your next pastor. And we gather together to worship God who made us and loves us as we live out being church.

And now per the church calendar, we have entered the season after Pentecost, "Ordinary Time". Ordinary as typical, day-in-and-day-out life, for ourselves, our communities of friends and family, and of the church local and global. This is a time where the gospel readings from Luke tell of how Jesus traveled through his world, healing, teaching, and preparing and sending others to do so likewise, to share the good news of God's work in their lives. These two millennia later we also will hear and engage in discourse as we live out lives of being God's church. All our welcome to join us in being the church!

Ways that being church is manifested include these "sound bites", for the month of June, from the United Church of Christ's "Be the church" banner:

* Care for the poor * June 5 - Luke 7: 11-17;

* Forgive often * June 12 - Luke 7: 36 - 8: 3;

* Fight for the powerless * June 19 - Luke 8: 26-39;

* Reject racism * June 26 - Luke 9: 51-62.

And still to come as the summer goes on: *Protect the environment.

*Embrace diversity. *Love God.

*Share earthly and spiritual resources. *Enjoy this life.

What "sound bites" would you add? Please share them with us, so we may explore together and reflect on so many ways of being church. Also, please share what some of your favorite hymns are (first line or title is enough - and they don't have to be in The United Methodist Hymnal we use). Sharing via paper, email, or talking with me all work!

As summer in Vermont progresses, we'll continue to hear of Jesus' life and ministry as told in the gospel of Luke, to proclaim with the psalmist our hopes, laments, and praise, to hear the stories of our ancestors in the faith and the procla-

mations of the prophets, and to peruse writings of the early church as they wrestled with what their lives of faith were in their time and place. If you want to look up quickly on line scripture readings for the week, here's a link:

<http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/lections.php?year=C&season=Season%20after%20Pentecost> .

Additionally, we have them on paper in the forms of bookmarks or the "travelogue" booklet at the church that you can take with you.

I'm so glad we are being the church together! As the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, hear also these words as for us: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

Shalom,

Pastor Lynn

Mission Committee Happening...

First, the Mission Committee would like to thank all of those who contributed to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. This offering will be used to help refugees around the world. We were proud to send off \$575 for this important work of mission and asked that the money be sent to the area of greatest need.

This month, we made a contribution to the Sharon Food Shelf. We hope that Strafford residents are aware that this resource is available to anyone who is in need, even if the need is temporary. Clients can get food up to two times each month. The food shelf is located in the big white house with a porch across from the Sharon church and is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30-6:30pm.

We continue our relationship with the Veteran's Place in Northfield, VT. We are currently working on obtaining new furniture for their common room.

Magazines are being collected for local hospitals. Please place current magazines in the back of the sanctuary to be delivered. Please leave the covers on and remove any name/address information on the front page with a magic marker or just cut out that section.

If you or your family is planning on participating in the Prouty this year, please let us know. We may be able to help to sponsor you!

At the last council meeting, the possibility of developing a relationship with a missionary was discussed and was well received. The Mission Committee will be discussing this exciting opportunity at the next meeting. If you happen to have a connection with someone working in the field or an organization that does, please let one of us know.

As always, we are always looking for either missions to support or service work. Please let one of us know if you have an idea!

Thank you for all of your support!
Danette Harris, chair

Upcoming 2016 – 17 Pledge Drive!

The Stewardship Committee is beginning to plan the 2016-17 pledge drive. With the pending reality of making an offer to a settled pastor, please be prayerfully considering how you can help support this vital community organization.

Trustees Report

Our treasurer reports that we are on track financially. The trustees are working on the 2016-17 budget, so please let them know of any budget items for next year's budget.

There will be several indoor painting projects this summer, both at the parsonage and the church, as the trustees work to keep our buildings and grounds of the church well maintained.

A special thank you to Jack Welsh for mowing the church lawn, and to Diane Tensen for the beautiful flowers that grace the front entrance.

The one-year covenant with Pastor Lynn has been extended another year or less, until a settled pastor has been called.

A Poem by Mel Goertz

Roadwork: trees moving
in wind, sparkling in sun,
resting in shade, as I wait.

Religious Ed

At the June council meeting, it was agreed to provide childcare every Sunday. We are grateful to Sophie Prescott who has agreed to provide the care as her schedule allows. If you know of someone who might be interested as well, please let us know.

Imagine a Church

The Settled Pastor Search Committee of nine members has completed the church profile – an important first step in calling a settled pastor. A copy of the profile is available on the website under “Minutes and More” and can be printed upon request. The profile has been sent on to our two conferences – the VT/NH American Baptist Conference, and the United Church of Christ Vermont Conference.

Next steps will be to review any candidate's applications and begin the interviewing process.

In Gratitude for Lives Shared

As Pastor Lynn mentioned above, we have mourned the passing on of several members of our church community.

Ned Coffin was a major contributor to our church both with time and talent, serving most recently as trustee, but also working with the late Tom Gerlach on a large capital campaign effort to make lasting structural improvements to the sanctuary. He sang in numerous Lord's Acre shows, and his wonderful bass voice filled the sanctuary on a Sunday morning.

Nancy Gerlach was a stalwart member of the church, serving on the Stewardship committee for many years, redefining it to include outreach and community building. She inspired “Strafford Talks” gatherings, and hosted many a potluck meeting at her home.

Before Sheila Paget moved to Norwich, she was a regular choir member with the church – a joy to sing with!

Pat Reynolds donated many hours to organizing the church library in her role as librarian. She also was on the current search committee, and coached the Religious Ed committee, helping create fun and educational camp opportunities for children. At her recent funeral, her family sent notes of thanks which we include here:

“Pat's brother, Don, and sisters Beverly and Rose, and their extended families want to acknowledge and ex-

press their thanks for the many acts of kindness shown to Pat from giving her rides to and from appointments; providing meals, and spending many, many hours caring for her dogs. Also a very special thanks to April for always being there for Pat whenever she needed her. And a big thank you to members of the Fast Squad for their numerous responses to Pat's calls for assistance. It gave us a great deal of comfort knowing someone would be there for her.

We thank everyone who in any way helped Pat. She was so fortunate to have such caring people surrounding her.”

Pat's List of Scriptures

Pat shared with Pastor Lynn a selection of scriptures that were special to her. We share them with you, that they may bring you comfort.

Job 19: 25-27; Psalm 23; Psalm 27: 7-14; Psalm 46: 1-3, 10-11; Psalm 121; John 14; I Corinthians 13: 1-11

From the Nominating Committee

Many helping hands keep the church vibrant. Please consider volunteering to serve on a board or committee. This year we also seek a co-clerk. Volunteering is both rewarding time spent in community and so very valuable to the church.

CHURCH CONTACTS

Moderator: Bill Burden

Pastor: Interim Pastor Lynn Wickberg

Music Director: To be announced

Treasurer: Kerry Claffey

Clerk: Dori Wolfe

Deacons: Rebecca Bailey (chair), Kim Arsenault, Greg Lewis, RJ Farley, Gretchen Hannon, Open

Trustees: John Hawkins (chair), John Echeverria, Open

Committees:

Pastoral Relations: John Echeverria, Greg Lewis, Danette Harris

Religious Education: Kathy Robinson (co-chair), Dori Wolfe (co-chair),

Stewardship: Joey Hawkins (chair), June Solsaa

Missions: Danette Harris (chair), Bill and Dot Burden, Kim Arsenault

Hospitality: Kate Reimanis (chair), Laura Lewis

Endowment: Ken Bushnell (chair), John Hawkins, Kevin Plunkett

Nominating: RJ Farley (chair), Hazel Lewis, with assistance from Ken Bushnell