

## MINISTER'S COLUMN Scott Couper

Have you ever heard the saying, 'Don't throw the baby out with the bath water'? I love that saying because it encourages us to change, to progress. Yet, it cautions us to do so intentionally, with care. It says, 'some things need to be thrown-out'. But it also says 'some things should not'!

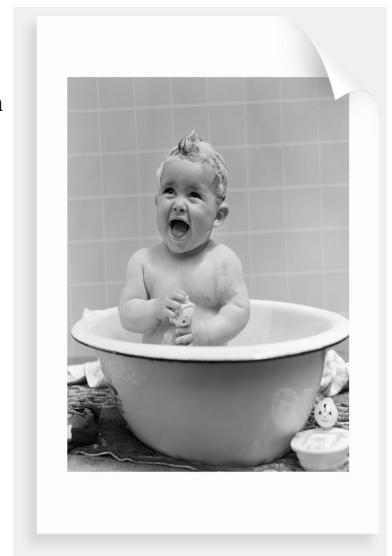
Have you ever heard the African proverb, 'A tree cannot stand on the ground without its roots'? I love this proverb because it teaches us that we must know from where we come. Not knowing renders us insecure, unstable and susceptible to being lost.

Finally, have you heard the African proverb, 'We desire to bequeath two things to our children. The first one is roots and the other is wings'? I love this quote because it speaks a truth about the need to look and proceed forward, but with the grounding of the past.

All these sayings are relevant to our beloved Centre Congregational Church (UCC). I am a conservative at heart. By conservative, I mean I love the past – and I often don't want things to change. I am a trained historian, an archivist, a lover of museums and historic sites. I love old buildings, old cars, old music (Brahms and Beethoven). I love and accepted a call to Centre Church *because* it is a church with a rich and beautiful history that I want to see preserved.

That said, the viability of our church requires us to change, to adapt, to progress, to modernize. By *exclusively* holding on to the past (in terms of our building, our 'artefacts' and our culture), we risk alienating potential new members who are unchurched, wounded by the church, millennials, and/or families.

When potential new members walk into a church, they want to see a church that is active, intentional, relevant and vibrant now and moving into the future. I pray you will join me in discerning together 'what is the bath water' and 'what is the baby'? That which is obsolete must go. That which guides us must stay. In order to be more effective in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, our church environment should acknowledge our past, but demonstrate relevance for today and excitement for the future. To be modern and contemporary does not mean we must abandon our history and heritage. Surely not, I pray we can journey together to discover how to become more contemporary and thus relevant, without losing that which is timeless.



**COUNCIL CHAIR, Bill McCarty**

There seems to be a problem at Centre Church on Sunday mornings. There has been a shortage of programs and we have needed to print more! Not a bad problem to have !!

Why is this a problem? Attendance is up and increased above our usual summer attendance --- a great sign for Centre Church. I am looking forward to September and the return to our larger and more usual 'full house'. Things are looking up!

Everyone's help is needed now. All Boards, Committees and Council have been busy this summer. And especially active, successful and hardworking is Fundraising. Their latest project is the Welcome Center 'Coffee Break' event on Friday, 31 August beginning at 7 AM and lasting all day. (Labor Day weekend).

Fundraising is a wonderful, successful and hardworking group. They deserve a well deserved 'Thank You' from all of us for their great work and success. And a 'thank you' to all of the members and friends who contribute and assist at the event.

Our stewardship campaign will be beginning soon. This year it will be chaired by Lynn Herzog and Lisa Keller. Let's all help them in this very important event and make it the most successful in years!! More to come from the Stewardship Committee.

The steeple work is completed and it looks great. It is a wonder how it looked previously and how ten years takes a toll on our iconic landmark.

A special 'thank you' is given to all who have supported and worked on the improvements.

A reminder that all Council, Board, and committee meetings are open to all members and friends of Centre Church. Come and participate in the governing and organization of Centre Church. If anyone has an idea or proposal, don't hesitate to tell a Council or Board member. All meetings are informal and comments are welcome. See you all at the Welcome Center on Friday and at Centre Church on Sunday.

**Bill McCarty, Council Chair**

From Music Director,

MARYMILKEY-MAY

As we wind down our summer music program, I would like to thank the last group of soloists who provided special music for August. Shout outs go to Tony Grobe and Stephanie Cary who sang a duet, Eric Strickland who did his first solo ever and The Monadnock Recorder Ensemble which included five members and was set up by Lynn Herzog. All of these folks contributed greatly to the services during August. We finished the month with an anthem from the combined choirs of area churches on August 26. Following that service, Dart, Tony and Roger hosted an end of the summer cook out for choir folks which was held at Splash. What a great way to end the summer!

Adult choir rehearsals will begin on Thursday, September 6 at 7:00 in the Choir Room. If you haven't joined us yet, please know you are welcome! We plan on singing on Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup> and continuing through May.

Children's choir rehearsals will begin after church on September 23. We had five wonderful kids last year who gifted us with their singing numerous times. We'd love to have some more folks join so if you have children who might be interested, please speak to me. We rehearse weekly after services.

Thanks again to each person who provided summer music from mid-June through August. All of you added your special talents to the service. We are all very grateful.



News items and articles should be submitted to the church administrator. Please contact the church administrator with address changes or requests to be added or removed from the *Centre Bells* mailing list at: 802-254-4730-or-[centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org](mailto:centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org).

## BOARD FOR MISSION & SERVICE

### Second Sunday Offerings Catch-Up!

May's Second Sunday Offering was for the Brattleboro Summer Lunch Program that helps children who would qualify for free lunch during the school year by supplying nutritious lunches through Summer vacation. Thanks to your generosity and the best ever grant from the VT Conference, we were able to send \$829.19 to Windham Southeast Supervisory Union (WSESU) this year!

June's Second Sunday Offering was for Brattleboro Centre for Children: \$500 was given, split between offering income and local outreach budget.

July's Second Sunday Offering was for Carry Me Home. \$225 was given immediately to be taken directly to Greece. An additional \$247 followed and will be distributed soon.

August's Second Sunday Offering was for Brattleboro Senior Meals. As of press time, \$142 had been received.

September's Second Sunday Offering will be PINS (Partners in Service) which helps the local Department of Children and Families office with needs for foster children.

**Moment for Peace** on Friday, September 7 will be our own pastor Scott Couper showing a documentary and talking about his book on Albert Luthuli, the first Black African Nobel Peace prize winner.

**World Communion Sunday** will be October 7; we are asking the deacons to add a South African flag to the others they borrow, for Scott.

**Give It Twice Fair** will be held at the same time as the Christmas Bazaar, inviting our church's own causes (Luz del Mundo Scholarship, Centre for Children and Carry Me Home) and other nonprofits in the community to set up tables to sell merchandise and educate the public about what they do. Priscilla Svec is in charge of starting what we hope could become an annual event.

## Join us for a painting party!

We're painting trim on September 22, from 9am until noon. Join our United Way volunteers to help us make this go quickly and smoothly. We will provide paint and drop-cloths.

Please bring brushes (and gloves if you like) to help us get this job done.

Let Nan know if you can help.

Thank you!



## MEMBER CARE

### New Coffee Hour Schedule

In our fellowship time following church service members of Member Care, with the help of some volunteers, filled in the Sundays of July and August. We served up thirst quenching beverages along with some delicious snacks.

Making this list for 'Fellowship' in the parlor poses a problem every year.. It is challenging as we try to spread the responsibility over the several committees and boards of our church. In years past the Christian Education was assigned September. That is not possible with the small number of people on that board.

As I write this I am pretty sure there will be an ice cream Sunday on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of September by members of C.E. Maybe Anne Fecto's scrumptious chocolate sauce will magically appear.

I am writing this in mid August .We decided to post the schedule in the parlor with blank lines for September. We're hoping that some people will volunteer to fill the blanks. This is a tradition at Centre Church

The schedule will be posted on the bulletin board in the parlor where the sign up for flowers is posted also. There is another sign up sheet for treating for coffee. If you would like to buy a pound of Fair Trade Coffee we use for church events, sign up there. It is \$7.00 a pound. When you write out your check please be sure to note that this is for Coffee.

Thanks to all who served up lemonade, iced tea and snacks these past hot summer Sundays.

September	Volunteers to sign up
October	deacons
November	The former pastoral Search committee
December	Mission and Service
January	Choir
February	Finance and Endowment
March	Council
April	Pastoral Relations/ Peace and Justice
May	Fund raising Committee
June	Building and Grounds
July and August	Member Care

## BCC

Brattleboro Centre for Children closed the last week of August, as we do annually, for staff in service. This year, we are consolidating our classrooms from 4 to 3 and reinventing some of our spaces for multi-purpose usage.

We will keep the upstairs classroom space open, as we must have that for Civil Rights compliance with the federal food program and will continue to use the classroom at the end of that hall for small group use. We reopened after Labor Day with children moving on to their new classrooms. If you'd like to visit our space, please come down, we'd love to show you around!

By now we are sure you have noticed the new look on the playground. We are actually pleased with the way it finally turned out (after a lot of working back and forth and communication—thanks to Bill McCarty for helping to facilitate that!); having more space really enlivens the children's out door times. We are thinking about adding a gate to the new section to make it more convenient for teachers, children and families to access.

## El Salvador Sister Parish Convention

by Jenifer Ambler

The 5th annual Sister Parish Encuentro will be held in El Salvador in November, and I've already registered and gotten my plane tickets for November 6-12! This gathering of representatives from churches all over the world with sister parishes in El Salvador happens on the average every three years, and so far representatives from Centre Church have attended three of them. This one will be in La Palma, an artisan mecca in the mountains north of San Salvador, which I've never visited but for which I have heard lots of praise.

I've been asked why El Salvador is my 'Happy Place' and it's very hard to put it into words, but I'll try. A little history lesson: When I first moved to Brattleboro, I was aware that people in the town and at Centre Church had been involved in objecting to the U.S. presence in the Salvadoran civil War. Does anyone remember the 'U.S. OUT OF EL SALVADOR' spray-painted on the wall of the tunnel into Harmony Lot? After Jack Bixby and then Peter Abell traveled to El Salvador and brought back their stories, Peter and I and some others in the Brattleboro Rotary Club decided we wanted to help the impoverished people of this war-wounded country. Our first trip was a Rotary medical clinic in 1994 in a small refugee repopulation village; we also facilitated the first face to face meeting between Salvadoran Rotary Club members (the right) and former rebel supporters in the village (the left). Meanwhile, Jo Shelnutt-Melendy, our then associate pastor, adopted 2 children from El Salvador and we supported her on these literal, figurative, spiritual and emotional journeys. And meanwhile, Centre Church was in the process of getting established with a sister parish in El Salvador. Our next medical trip in 1997 was to visit this new sister church, Cristo Redentor, in the rural outskirts of Apopa, El Salvador. Over the years, as we tried to figure out what we could do that was most sustainable, two priorities emerged: education and safe drinking water.

We started the Luz del Mundo Scholarship Fund jointly with First Church UCC of Farmington, CT on the principle that the longer we can help keep kids in school the more able they will be to support their families later in life. Meanwhile still, the Brattleboro Rotary Club was working on water purification systems, leading to a 1998 water trip and eventually to the founding of Pure Water For The World. So, wearing multiple hats, I just kept going and going! Along with multiple other travelers from Centre Church, other churches, medical professionals, Rotarians, and just plain volunteers. Church trips, medical trips, Rotary trips, almost annually...I've lost count!

Continued...

## El Salvador Sister Parish Convention Continued...

El Salvador may be a poor and troubled country, but it's also beautiful. The smell of the air when the plane doors open after landing feels like 'I'm home!' Flowers, palms, sugar cane fields, beaches of black volcanic sand, flocks of cackling parrots, Spanish colonial architecture, raucous markets, brightly colored art and textiles. And *pupusas*! But best of all, El Salvador's people are beautiful. At Cristo Redentor, they may have very little money or material possessions, but the kindness and generosity is amazing. There's nothing like a delicious *tipico* meal being cooked over an open fire in a dirt-floored house with a tin roof and chickens underfoot; the love put into it makes it even more delicious. Through twenty years of the Luz del Mundo Scholarship, we have taken children from kindergarten to colleges and trade schools. Teenagers who have traveled there have truly had their eyes opened and been changed by the experience. And in the case of my daughter Kate, who first went with me in fifth grade, the trips have led to long-lasting friendships! I can't wait to go back again: to rekindle relationships among the other sister parish people, to joke around with Pastor Francisco Aguilar (who has visited VT a couple of times), to hug Samuel (who we brought up here for treatment at the Shrine Hospital) and his mother Antonia, to see how much Francisco and Gloria's daughter (Itzia) has grown, to visit the homes of scholarship recipients and hear how their school year is going, to worship and take communion at Cristo Redentor.

I hope some of you made it to the Windham World Affairs Council program on El Salvador held in our parlor on August 24. If any of this makes you consider coming along with me or brings to your mind questions, feel free to talk to me any time!

# SEPTEMBER



"So teach us to  
number our days  
that we may get  
a heart of  
wisdom."

Psalm 90:12





## FAITH FORMATION

It doesn't seem like summer can be wrapping up so soon, but we are now looking ahead to the beginning of the school year and starting our Faith In Action back up! We look forward to providing more programming for the older children again, and as always, nursery care for the under 5 year old crowd is provided every Sunday. We are still putting the details of the what the Faith In Action program will consist of this year, but it should be similar to what was offered last year. We are so fortunate that Haley Marcil is interested in continuing to take the lead on the Faith In Action program execution!

**We want to announce our annual Ice Cream Social will be held following service on Sunday Sept 16.**

(the 3rd Sunday this year, not the second Sunday)

At this time anyone and everyone interested in volunteering for Faith In Action, either with an idea of your own, or as a second pair of hands for Haley is encouraged to sign up or speak with Haley, James or Logan. We will also be starting the children's choir back up starting Sept 23, so if you have children who like to sing talk to Mary Milkey May. Looking forward to a fun and productive year!



## WOMEN'S SPIRIT

We have just begun a brand new book by John Shelby Spong titled UNBELIEVABLE, or Why Neither Ancient Creeds Nor Reformation Can Produce a Living Faith Today. It promises to be a challenging book which may bring on some differences of opinion, but this group has found that these differences only strengthen our outlooks and beliefs. No opinion is ignored or put down and is open to everyone. If you do not own the book, it is read during the hour we meet each Thursday at 4:30 p.m. in the library. Any questions, call Joanne MacLean 803-363-8348.

## BROWN BAG GROUP

After a summer hiatus this group will again meet on the first Wednesday of the month in the church for conversation and information. Just bring your lunch and meet at noon on September 5 for an hour of sharing. Any questions, call Joanne MacLean 603-363-8348.



# CHURCH LIFE

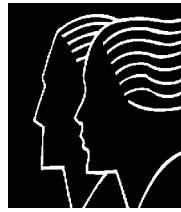
## BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Betty Igleheart
- 4 Gary Carrier
- 6 Mary Robertson
- 9 Lillian Griffin
- 10 Margaret Johnson  
Jim Bedard
- 13 Gary Smith
- 18 Gisela Robeck
- 23 Joy Everett
- 25 Marlene Jameson
- 29 Rebecca Day



## ANNIVERSARIES

- 4 Rob & Sue Rowell  
Lisa & Matt Vose
- 5 Adelaide & Addison Minott
- 18 Dawn & Ron Pollard
- 19 Richard Nelson & Pat Verboom



# PEOPLE



A word of good cheer  
would be warmly received by members and friends of  
our church who are in nursing homes, assisted living  
centers, or are housebound as of August 30 2018. *If  
we've missed someone,*

FRAN BURROWS (603) 499-4610

Bently Commons

197 Water St

Keene, NH 03431

JEANNE RUETER

Thompson House, 80 Maple St.,  
Brattleboro, VT 05301 254-4977

NANCY CLARKE

Holton Home, 158 Western Ave.,  
Brattleboro, VT 05301 254-5005

WANDA GODFREY

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Vernon, VT 05354 254-2444

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Ames, IA 50014 (515)337-1956

JANE REED

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Townshend, VT 05353 (802)221-4213

KAREN GETTY PETER

Langdon Place, 136 Arch Street, Room  
152

Keene, NH 03431 (603)357-3902

ROGER KETCHAM

C/O 8 Williams Court

DOT ATOMANUK

665 Upper Dummerston Rd.

Brattleboro, VT 05301

(802) 254-4365



\*Holy Communion  
celebrated

						1 11:00 Writing group in library
2* 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship* 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	3 1 <sup>00</sup> Prayer Shawl  OFFICE CLOSED	4 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	5 12:00 Brown Bag	6 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 7 <sup>00</sup> Choir Rehearsal	7 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	8
9 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 11 <sup>30</sup> Board Meeting	10 1 <sup>00</sup> Prayer Shawl 7 <sup>30</sup> AA District 8	11 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting TBD	12	13  1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 7 <sup>00</sup> Choir Rehearsal  6-9PM BWC	14 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting Centre Bells Deadline  5-9PM WWAC	15 11 <sup>00</sup> Writing group in library
16 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	17 1 <sup>00</sup> Prayer Shawl	18 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> Church Council	19 Centre Bells mailed	20 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 7 <sup>00</sup> Choir Rehearsal	21 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	22
23 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	24  7 <sup>00</sup> Spiritual Conversations	25 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	26	27 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 7 <sup>00</sup> Choir Rehearsal	28 1 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 5 <sup>30</sup> Moment for Peace 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	29 11 <sup>00</sup> writing group in library
30 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting						

## September Lectionary

### Texts:

#### **Sunday, September 2**

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9  
Psalm 15  
James 1:17-27  
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

#### **Sunday, September 9**

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23  
Psalm 125  
James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17  
Mark 7:24-37

#### **Sunday, September 16**

Proverbs 1:20-33  
Psalm 19 or Wisdom 7:26—8:1  
James 3:1-12  
Mark 8:27-38

#### **Sunday, September 23**

Proverbs 31:10-31  
Psalm 1  
James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a  
Mark 9:30-37

#### **Sunday, September 30**

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22  
Psalm 124  
James 5:13-20  
Mark 9:38-50

**CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
193 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301-2842

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**Website:** [www.centrechurchvt.org](http://www.centrechurchvt.org)

**Facebook:** [Centre Congregational Church-Brattleboro, VT](https://www.facebook.com/Centre-Congregational-Church-Brattleboro-VT)

**CHURCH STAFF AND LEADERSHIP**

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Custodian

Gary Smith

Council Chair

Bill McCarty

Treasurer

Anne Fecto

Clerk

Connie Bresnahan

**2 0 1 8**

**SEPTEMBER**

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
193 Main Street Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

BRATTLEBORO, VT 05301

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