MINISTER'S COLUMN, Scott Couper

Dear Friends in Christ!

The beginning of the Declaration of Independence reads, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness". So, politically speaking, we desire happiness.

I am currently halfway through a wonderful book entitled *Sapiens: A Brief History of Human-kind* by Yuval Noah Harari. The author writes, "Money social status, plastic surgery, beautiful houses, powerful positions – none of these will bring you happiness". So, historically speaking, happiness is not derived *externally* nor from a state of *vanity*.

The Hebrew scriptures speaks often how happiness is attained. Psalm 146:5 reads, "Happy is [the one] who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord". Proverbs 3:13 states, "Happy is the [one]...who gains understanding" and 14:21 reads "Happy is [one] who has mercy on the poor". So, biblically speaking, we can discern that happiness is for the most part derived *internally* and from a state of *humility*.

In the Christian scriptures, Jesus proclaimed that he desires that we may have life and that we may have it more abundantly (John 10:10). While Jesus washed the disciples' feet, he said blessed (happy) are you if you do acts of service (John 13:17). James 5:11 states, "Indeed we count them blessed (happy) those who endure". And finally, I Peter 3:14 reads, "But even if you should suffer for righteousness's sake, you are blessed (happy)".

The author of *Sapiens* concluded "Happiness Begins Within". I believe this conclusion, historically based, is affirmed and supported by our Christian faith tradition. Jesus preached, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is', because the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20-21). I think it is a fair assumption that happiness can be equated with, or is synonymous with, God's kingdom. Thus, "Happiness Begins Within".

This election season is so full of angst and worry. Political pundits with dire warnings on both sides exacerbate our concerns. Tensions are high. There are legal battles full of contestation. There may even be violence, full of bile. With the Supreme Court meeting, millions may lose heath care. Without a second relief package from our Congress, none of us will receive any financial relief that would take some of the strain away. It is true that political peace, the provision of health care and financial security, contribute to, or accentuate, happiness – particularly for people who struggle from day to day, are vulnerable, and are on the margins. Yet, let us remember that as people of faith, ultimately, our happiness does not come from without but rather from within. The scriptures remind us that humility from within, hope from within, sympathy and empathy from within, patience from within, and the peace of God within is what ultimately engenders our happiness.

Be well. Love always in Christ, Scott

CENTRE BELLS—November 2020

The newsletter of Centre Congregational Church, United Church of Christ



Council Chair, LYNN HERZOG

The church's newest endeavor, the Long-range Planning Team, has already met several times, and they have decided they would like to have the services of Paul Nickerson as a consultant for the next year. (Paul has been our Vitality Coach the past year, and all who have worked with him think highly of him.) The Council's job was to approve the funding for him, and we did. We wish the committee and Paul much success in this important work.

The services in the sanctuary are going well, and are much appreciated by those who can attend. The next one will be November 8, when we will celebrate Harvest Sunday and begin our Stewardship Campaign.

Many people feel church only takes place for an hour on Sunday, and it is even less visible now during the pandemic. But there is so much that goes on behind the scenes. Scott reported on his 28 visits to shut-ins this month, and the many ZOOM meetings he attends, for church and community. Buildings & Grounds are always busy with repairs to this old building. Haley is engaging with families on the best way to continue Christian Education for their children. Deacons are keeping the sanctuary clean, attractive, and safe for our next gathered worship. Mission & Service is helping Loaves & Fishes deliver their daily meals and planning how to raise funds to support our El Salvador mission. One thing that, alas, will not be put online is the Christmas Bazaar. The Fundraising Committee hopes to do a fun fund-raising activity on the spring.

Thanks to all the people engaged in the work of the church, and especially to Jenifer, who does so much technical work, and Sue Rowell who has agreed to be our choir for the next two months.

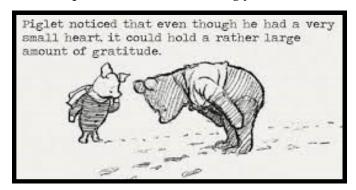


From Music Director, MARY MILKEY-MAY

It seems like the months are zipping by as if they were weeks! It hard to believe it's time for another *Centre Bells* posting.

We have now experienced our second in-person service (10/11) and I would like to thank Sue Rowell for being our hymn singer that day. Though we were having issues with our sound system, Sue could still easily be heard during the hymns and responses. She has graciously offered to help out again in November/December which is wonderful for all of us in the sanctuary.

It still feels like something is missing each week, and it is! Church minus the choir definitely leaves a void. Church without congregational singing definitely leaves a void. However, we intend to be safe until the COVID virus disappears. I sure look forward to the day we can all be back in the usual way. Meanwhile, we (Jenifer Ambler and I) continue to do weekly recordings so the ZOOM services will have organ music and the opportunity for hymn singing. If you haven't yet tried ZOOM, I recommend logging in. It is a nice way to experience and participate in worship services without leaving your home!



BRATTLEBORO CENTRE FOR CHILDREN

The pandemic has led to a great many changes in how BCC operates on a day to day basis, but one thing did not change this year: Pajama Day. Traditionally, we have Pajama Day on October 31, to provide the children with a special day of dressing down in order to minimize some of the candy and costume focused energy that is so pervasive around that holiday. It is a day they really look forward to and even the teachers get into the spirit! Fluffy slippers, bathrobes, and blankies abound in all the classrooms and Ms. Nan goes from room to room reading bedtime stories and singing lullabies. It's an unusual day, but one of more normalcy in true BCC tradition as well as a way to welcome in the longer nights of fall and winter seasons.

Nan Mann, Director

DEACONS

On September 13, after painstaking preparation, the conscientious work of many, and more than six months of closure, our sanctuary was re-opened for in-person worship. Restricted entrances, filling out health forms, using the thermometers — there was a profusion of new protocols to learn. We are grateful to Priscilla Svec and Nan Mann for their calm and professional assistance, and to Reverend Scott for guidance. It was abundant joy to greet dear friends at our doors again, to look upon beloved faces, even if only from the eyes up.

We felt we were quite getting the hang of our 'new normal' for our second COVID in-person service on October 11. Jenifer Ambler's technical capabilities have facilitated live-streaming of the second Sunday service on Facebook for those who are unable to attend physically.

We had only just started to adjust to the retirement of long-time chair and benevolent guru Carlene McCarty when we had another change in our ranks. Lynn Herzog valiantly accepted the role of Council Chair, with Sue Rowell serving as Co-chair. Bravo, Lynn and Sue! With utmost thanks to Lynn for her service as deacon, we are confident her quiet efficiency, steady hand, and faithful dedication will be a continued blessing to Centre Church.

In losing Lynn, we gained a worthy replacement, as former Council Chair Bill McCarty has stepped up to the plate. Thank you, Bill, and we hope you don't feel you've been busted to Private. Bill will also serve as Deacon's liaison to Council. His experience, insight, and knowledge will be invaluable assets, and he will no doubt keep us all shipshape and properly in line.

As bright leaves fall and the air turns crisp, we think with some sadness of gatherings we ordinarily would be sharing this poignantly beautiful time of year. May we see these extraordinary times not as loss, or with grieving, but as opportunity for quietude, for reflection, renewal, hope, and growth. We look forward to our next in-person worship on November 8, and in the meantime, hope to see you ZOOMing!

In Faith, Heidi Mario







MISSION & SERVICE

Mission & Service would like to thank all who have donated to this year's Second Sunday offerings. It's been difficult to continue these donations, but because of you, we are able to provide some assistance during this difficult times. October's Second Sunday's offering to *Neighbors in Need*, was wonderful with \$360 being donated on October 11. Thank you to all who donated. On November 8, the Second Sunday Offering will go to the *Help Fund* which is under the SEVCA umbrella.

Also on November 8, we will celebrate our Thanksgiving Food Drive as this is our 'in person' Sunday. Please bring nonperishable food items which can go to the Drop In Center or Loaves & Fishes. Our Cornucopia, made of Fall's wonderful harvest foods will be donated to Loaves & Fishes. When you arrive at church at 9:30, bring something to add to this cornucopia - apples, any kind of squash, potatoes, or other root vegetables. Think Autumn garden produce! All is welcomed.

Another very important mission of Centre Church is the *Luz del Mundo* scholarships to children in Cabinits, El Salvador. Each year we support this small community through school scholarships, by sending \$1,500. This money supports more than a dozen students from kindergarten to college age with books, uniforms, admission fees, etc. depending on their age and grade level. We hope that you will consider a donation that will help continue our Centre Church connection with the children and the community of Cabinitas. Please look at the church's Facebook page for updated letters, photos, and videos from Rev. Francisco and Cabinitas.

After months of being closed, *Carry Me Home* has returned to their 'home' on Centre Church's stage. With many hours of cleaning and reorganizing, *Carry Me Home* is getting closer to starting up again. They will be putting a list of items needed and will begin boxing-up needed clothing and shoes to ship to refugees and camps. We are grateful for the time spent readying the space and for the work that *Carry Me Home* does.







LOAVES & FISHES

News of the Thanksgiving Community Meal and how you can help

Despite COVID-19, the Thanksgiving Community Meal will live on with a few changes. In the past many volunteers worked cooking the meal, serving the meal, delivering the meal, and cleaning up. There were over 600 meals served and many volunteers. Now with COVID, a new model has been developed. Everyone Eats, the restaurant program that creates 800 meals four times a week, will make the bulk of the meal. There will be turkey, potatoes, a vegetable, and stuffing. But help is still needed delivering meals, financial support and help is needed making pies. They hope to provide 1,000 meals to our community.

Loaves & Fishes has a dedicated corps of bakers. We hope to provide about 50 or more pies and I am hoping more of Centre Church's congregation can help.

Loaves & Fishes has ingredients we can provide: canned pumpkin, apples, frozen blueberries, butter, and sugar.

- Volunteering for help with delivery: Visit the Downtown Brattleboro Alliance web page and scroll to Everyone Eats and you'll find their information and how to contact Frances Hurley (frances@brattleboro.com)
- Volunteering to make pies: contact Ruth Tilghman: 802.258.1765 / rtilgh09@aol.com or Jean Smith: 802.258.4824 / revjrsmith@comcast.net.
- Help with a monetary donation to *Everyone Eats Thanksgiving Dinner*.

COMMUNICATION from the WIDER UCC COMMUNITY



Day 20 (Tuesday, Nov. 3)

"Choosing Life" by Rev. Lynn Bujnak

Scripture Focus: "I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life that you and your descendants may live..." (Deuteronomy 30:19 NRSV).

Reflection: As we have prayed our way through these 20 days leading to today's election, I hope you have found food for the journey, companions along the way and a deeper understanding of your faith. As we vote and then watch for the results, there is bound to be a great deal of tension, anxiety and uncertainty. We may very well not know who won the presidential election for some time. In this passage from the book of Deuteronomy, the people whom God led out of slavery in Egypt have been wandering in the wilderness for a very long time. But now, they are on the verge of entering the Promised Land at last. This is part of Moses' farewell speech. It was a time of great uncertainty for this small band of God's followers. Moses is encouraging them to remember that God is always with them and there will be a future of promise if only they will choose what is lifegiving and not death-dealing. Regardless of who becomes our next president, we will still face choices about how we will go on from here. Will the choices, actions, speech, and values we proclaim and live be imbued with life or death, filled with blessings or curses? As we walk through these next days and weeks, as the old hymn says, will they "know we are Christians (people of faith) by our love?

Prayer: Gracious God, as the tension rises along with voices, when it is difficult to know the truth, when the future seems uncertain, remind us of your never- failing presence. Help us to choose life, for ourselves, for the whole human family and the for the earth. Amen.

Rev. Lynn Bujnak serves as the Conference Minister of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ.

MEMBER CARE

Congratulations to the newest member of Centre Congregational Church's Silver Bells Society for 25 years of membership, October 25, 2020:

Li-Ming Pu



2020 SILVER BELLS SOCIETY OF CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

- 10			
Marion Abell	1981	Sylvia Hunter Eaton	1968
Peter Abell	1981	Clyde Johnson	1963
Jenifer Ambler	1991	Lisa Keller	1987
Patricia Austin	1976	Darlene LaPlante	1961
Amy Balin	1994	Isabelle Mann	1962
Julie Ball	1988	Nan Reed Mann	1987
Michael Ball	1988	Carlene McCarty	1982
Diane Bassett	1955	William McCarty	1982
James Bedard	1985	Bernadette (Mo) Meyer	1983
Jack Bixby	1981	Jeffrey Meyer	1983
Mary Ellen Bixby	1981	Roger Miller	1967
Constance Bresnahan	1983	Judith Miller	1953
Mary Bristol	1956	Addison Minott	1944
Verne Bristol	1956	Adelaide Minott	1959
Frances Burrows	1947	Dennis Newman	1984
Gary Carrier	1955	Judith Palmer	1982
Susan Cay	1992	Dawn Pollard	1986
Joanne Clark	1987	Ron Pollard	1986
Deborah Cope	1968	Li-Ming Pu	1995
Marion Daley	1989	Robert Pu	1983
Alfred Dascomb	1983	Sen Pu	1983
June Dascomb	1983	Wendy Randall	1965
Nancy DiMauro	1992	Jane Řeed	1981
Mary Ann Donovan	1955	Paul Rounds	1965
Dart Everett	1989	Albert Rydant	1985
Joy Everett	1989	Karen Rydant	1985
Anne Fecto	1993	Laura Slate	1987
Steve Fecto	1993	Carolyn Smith	1984
Arthur Freeman	1958	Alice Stockwell	1953
Wanda Godfrey	1966	Priscilla Svec	1984
Christopher Gray	1989	Ron Svec	1985
Susan Gray	1984	Lisa Terzariol Bigattin	1979
Dawn Grobe	1991	Patricia Verboom	1983
Alison Hale	1992	Allen Vander Meulen	1963
Richard Hamilton	1983	Dorothy Vander Meulen	1963
Roxanne Hamilton	1983	Rennie Washburn	1993
Betty Henry	1966	Beverly Webster	1982
David Henry	1965	Arnold Young	1956
Phyllis Hickok	1968	Marilyn Young	1950



2020 GOLDEN BELLS SOCIETY OF CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

1944	Adelaide Minott	1959
1947	Darlene LaPlant e	1961
1950	Isabelle Mann	1962
1953	Allen Vander Meulen	1963
1953	Dorothy Vander Meulen	1963
1955	David Henry	1965
1955	Wendy Randall	1965
1955	Paul Řounds	1965
1956	Wanda Godfrey	1966
1956	Roger Miller	1967
1956	Deborah Cope	1968
1958	-	
	1947 1950 1953 1953 1955 1955 1955 1956 1956 1956	 1947 Darlene La Plant e 1950 Isabelle Mann 1953 Allen Vander Meulen 1953 Dorothy Vander Meulen 1955 David Henry 1955 Wendy Randall 1955 Paul Rounds 1956 Wanda Godfrey 1956 Roger Miller 1956 Deborah Cope



ORDER 2020 CHRISTMAS

To give one or more poinsettias for Christmas, please fill out the form below for each plant ordered and return to the church office with your check made payable to: Centre Church addressed to:

193 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301 by Sunday, December 6. The plants will decorate the sanctuary from December 13 to the 24. You are invited to take yours home after Christmas Eve Service.

NAME	PHONE			
Circle one: IN HONOR / MEMORY / CELEBRATION OF / THANKSGIVING FOR				
	\$14.00			
Donation to	oward other decorations			
	TOTAL ENCLOSED			
	PHONE			
Circle one:				
IN HONOR / N OF / THANKS	MEMORY / CELEBRATION GIVING FOR			
	\$14.00			
Donation to	oward other decorations			
	TOTAL ENCLOSED			
	PHONE			
Circle one:				
IN HONOR / NOT / THANKS	MEMORY / CELEBRATION GIVING FOR			
	\$14.00			
Donation to	oward other decorations			

TOTAL ENCLOSED



NEW FRIENDS OF CENTRE CHURCH

AJ McDonald

43 Chestnut Hill Brattleboro, VT 05301 802.490.2858/mcdonaldaj@comcast.net

NEW CONTACT INFORMATION

Kaitlin Haskins & Sidharth Menon

15 Bullock St. #1 Brattleboro, VT 05301

Gabrielle & Teddy Martin

116 Oak Street Brattleboro, VT 05301

Matt Deen & Ella Kinsman

PO Box 366 / 72 Bellstrom Lane Townshend, VT 05301

Roger & Sandy Daly: 603.762.8684

Bill & Carlene McCarty

Land line has been disconnected, mobile #s:

Carlene: 802.380.2000 Bill: 802.380.1116

Good morning friends,



I want to thank you all for your prayers, especially for Roger, but also for including me. Over the decade and more that we lived in Chesterfield and related to the Brattleboro community I have always been grateful for this interfaith partnership, Ministry, and support.

Thankfully Roger is doing quite well following his stroke. The only evidence of change is some short term memory and cognition loss. That may improve with therapy. Faith and a sense of humor continue to see us through!

We have yet to develop a community and sense of calling up here in Maine due to COVID-19, but with patience and intention that will happen.

Keep up your important love, prayers, and work for peace, healing, and hope!

Ever your friend, Sandy (Daly)



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 March 26.

Fran Burrows—Langdon Place 136A Arch St. #150, Keene, NH 03431

Wanda Godfrey—Vernon Hall 13 Greenway Dr., Vernon, VT 05354 802.254.2444

Phyllis Hickok

1520 Little Blue Stem Ct., Ames, IA 50014 515.337.1956

Jane Reed—Pine Heights 187 Oak Grove Ave., Brattleboro, VT 05301 802.257.0307

Karen Getty Peter—Pine Rock Manor 3 Denny Hill Rd., Warner, NH 03278

The Rev. Allen Vander Meulen

1 Harvest Circle #301, Lincoln, MA 01773 802.380.0735

Sylvia Eaton

86 Brets Road, Brattleboro, VT 05301 802.254.6853

Alta Barber

13223 N 3937 Dr., Bartlesville, OK 74003

Pat Neer—Thompson House 80 Maple St., Brattleboro, VT 05301

Bob & Dee Keller

153 Spruce St., Brattleboro, VT 05301 802.257.4588

Please let the Administrator know if we've missed someone.

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Michael Mario
- 2 Judith Palmer
- 3 Joanne Clark
- 5 Fred Edmonds
- 7 Wayne Randall11 Shiva Shankaran
- 13 David Henry
- 14 Brady Hammett
- 14 Emma Hammett
- **26** Abi Healey



NOVEMBER 2020

*ZOOM events
**Holy Communion

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 ENDDAYLIGHTSAVINGS 10 [®] Worship ** zoom Communion/All Saints 12 [®] Deacons 7 [®] Worship Team	2 4 ⁰⁰ BCC Board	3 ELECTION DAY 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	4 8 ⁴⁵ Staff Meeting 7 ⁰⁰ First Wednesday*	5 10 ⁰⁰ UCC Devotional* 4 ⁰⁰ Sermon discussion* 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team	6 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	7
8 10 ⁰⁰ Worship church 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team	9	10 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 6 ⁰⁰ Mission & Service	11 VETERANS DAY 8 ⁴⁵ Staff Meeting 9 ⁰⁰ Kate Maisner chapel	12 10 [®] UCC Devotional* 4 [®] Sermon discussion* 7 [®] Worship Team	13 CB DEADLINE 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	14
15 10 ⁰⁰ Worship zoom 3 ⁰⁰ Windham Union Presentation* 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team	16 1 ⁰⁰ Compassionate Brattleboro	17 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	18 8 ⁴⁵ Staff Meeting 6 ⁰⁰ Church Council	19 10 ⁰⁰ UCC Devotional* 4 ⁰⁰ Sermon discussion* 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team	20 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	21
22 10 ⁰⁰ Worship zoom 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team	23	24 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	25 MAIL CB 8 ⁴⁵ Staff Meeting	26 THANKSGIVING OFFICE CLOSED	27 OFFICE CLOSED	28
29 1 0 ⁰⁰ Worship zoom 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team	30					

SCOTT'S SERMONS can be accessed at the church website: www.centrechurchvermont.org -or-facebook page: http://www.centrechurchvermont.org/audio--video.html -or-https://www.facebook.com/pg/Centre-Congregational-Church-Brattleboro-VT-632678343519640/notes/?ref=page_internal -or-From the website Welcome page, click Audio & Video in the top list (or click More or Other on the top right).



NOVEMBER LECTIONARY TEXTS

Sunday, November 1, 22nd Sunday after Pentecost Josh 3:7-17 and Ps 107; 1-7, 33-37; Mic 3:5-12 and Ps 43; 1 Thes 2:9-13; **Matt 23:1-12**

Sunday, November 8, 23rd Sunday after Pentecost Josh 24:1-3a, 14-25 and Ps 78:1-7; Wisd of Sol 6:12-16 or *Amos 5:18-24* and Wisd of Sol 6:17-20 or *Ps 70*; 1 Thes 4:13-18; **Matt 25:1-13**

Sunday, November 15, 24th Sunday after Pentecost Judg 4:1-7 and Ps 123; Zeph 1:7, 12-18 and Ps 90:1-8, (9-11), 12; 1 Thess 5:1-11; **Matt 25:14-30**

Sunday, November 22, Reign of Christ Ezek 34:11-16, 20-24 and Ps 100; Ezek 34:11-16, 20-24 and Ps 95:1-7a; Eph 1:15-23; **Matt 25:31-46**

Sunday, November 29, 1st Sunday of Advent Isa 64:1-9; **Ps 80:1-7**, **17-19**; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mk 13:24-37

Centre Bells is published monthly by Centre Congregational Church, UCC News items, articles, address changes, and

requests to be added or removed from the *Centre Bells* mailing list should be submitted to the church office: 802.254.4730 / admin@centrechurchytorg



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CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

193 Main Street Brattleboro, Vermont 05301 centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

193 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301-2842 **Office Hours:** M – F / 8:30am–12:30pm

Church Office: 802.254.4730 / admin@centrechurchvt.org

Website: www.centrechurchvt.org

Facebook: Centre Congregational Church-Brattleboro VT

Instagram: @centrechurchyt

Current news/information in the larger UCC Community: VT Conference: www.vtcucc.org / National: www.ucc.org

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centrepastor@centrechurchvt.org

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Administrator: Bruce Landenberger: admin@centrechurchvt.org
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Custodian: Emelio McCalla

Council Chair: Lynn Herzog

Transporter Apple Foots

Clarky Loniforn Apple for

Treasurer: Anne Fecto Clerk: Jenifer Ambler