

MINISTER'S COLUMN, Scott Couper

Dear Friends, in February I gave thanks for my church family, especially the deacons, for supporting Stephanie and I in our marriage to one another in the chapel. Now in May, I give thanks to my church family for assisting me move into our new home. Ron and Priscilla Svec, Alison Hale and Chis Chapman, Jacob Anderson, Daniel Guerra, and my dear friend Kadijatou Diallo assisted me with my grossly underestimated task of loading the contents of my two-bedroom apartment into two fully loaded Budget rental trucks. Pricilla was as hyper as ever. Ron Svec was a master packer – a three dimensional Tetris genius! So, with the help of my church friends, I learned (for I have never moved 'home furniture and contents' before – only suitcases) that one should not rely on paper bags in which to pack dishes and not to 'see if the rental truck can accelerate and corner as well as my Tesla' (apparently contents like furniture tend to, ah, what were the words?, 'violently shift'). The task could not have been done better! After three massively packed trucks hauled my contents to Massachusetts, the only damage was two scratches and a small piece of broken wood (all of which my father-in-law who is a carpenter can repair in minutes). That is incredibly positive outcome after four days of non-stop work. Kadijatou was astounded at the positive energy; she marveled the way my friends aided me; she was impressed with the work ethic demonstrated by my faith community.

For the foreseeable future, I will work **at home on Mondays and Tuesdays** (attending meetings via ZOOM); I will be **in the office on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays** (overnighting two nights only in town); I will work **from home on Saturdays** (service and sermon preparation); I will work **at the church on Sunday**. Stephanie and the girls intend to come to Brattleboro *every other weekend* to attend church and visit Vermont (where we intend to eventually move). This schedule will enable me to assist caring for Ana and Lydia, allow Stephanie to work part-time second shift at the hospital, and for me to **work five to seven days a week** for the church as per my call agreement – all while only making **two round trips per week** to my new home in Douglas, MA and to Brattleboro, VT. Stephanie and I have the full support of my in-laws for childcare and my parents will arrive this summer to spend two months with our family. I request that if you need to meet to me, that you **make an appointment** so that I am sure to have the time to give

you my full attention. I also ask that church committees, boards, and teams **schedule meetings that meet in person on Wednesdays (Council), Thursdays (devotionals), Fridays (wider church), or Sundays (Deacons)**. I do not foresee that my work has nor that it will at all suffer due to these changes in logistics and schedule. If anything, I see myself being more focused and productive than before. Thank you all for your love and support of me and my new family.

Love always in Christ, Scott

From the Music Director, MARY MILKEY-MAY

I greatly appreciate the choir folks who have pitched in to provide anthems for our online ZOOM services. Peter Abell sang a lovely arrangement of "Brother James' Air" for our communion service in May. Sue Rowell and Jenifer Ambler sang a two-part arrangement of "The Gift of Love" for Mother's Day. Also in May, we were fortunate to have another recording of Natalie Lewis as she beautifully presented "Precious Lord". (Natalie has been Ernie's soloist for the past two years at All Saints Episcopal Church in S. Hadley, MA.)

As you may remember, Natalie was a senior voice major at UMASS who just graduated. We were fortunate to hear her senior recital in May which she performed outside under a tent. Her hard work has paid off immensely as she was just awarded a full scholarship to The Julliard School of Music in NYC which even includes all living and traveling expenses. She will be pursuing her Master's Degree there in the fall. I mention this to you as I believe she will be performing at the Metropolitan Opera in a few years. She is THAT talented! We can all say we heard her sing during Centre Church ZOOM services!

I am still looking for folks who would be willing to record anthems throughout the summer. If you are willing to help out, please let me know. As of yet, I don't know what will happen when we return to church in September. I sure hope we will be able to restart the choirs...especially since we will likely have all been vaccinated. I am following the singing guidelines very closely. We will do whatever is recommended for safety!

CENTRE BELLS—June 2021

The newsletter of
**Centre Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ**

Council Chair, LYNN HERZOG

Centre Church is so fortunate to have such wonderful people on the Church Council! They are all dedicated, hard-working, caring, considerate, inspired, and inspiring. They are always ready to lead an action or lend a hand. In short, they are saints. I name no names because they are many, but they know who they are. Plus there are equally saintly people who attend our meetings but aren't officially members.

But you don't have to be a saint to help the church. Our Annual Program Meeting will be held soon (tentatively scheduled for July 11) and we will be looking for people to help carry out the many programs of the church. We need help especially with Christian Education, but also with Mission & Service, Deacons, Buildings & Grounds, and Member Care. God calls us to serve in many ways, and these are some ways. Admittedly, in the middle of a long committee meeting you may not feel that you are serving God or following the example of Jesus Christ (don't think he went to any committee meetings), but you are helping Centre Church carry out its mission. And meeting a lot of wonderful people while doing it. So please join in – and Be the Church.

LONG-RANGE PLANNING TEAM

During the month of May members of the Long Range Planning Team (LRPT) contacted community leaders with the following introduction: "We are seeking as a church to be more relevant and thus vital to our community. Hence we are asking you questions that will help us understand better the community - its characteristics and needs". Some of the questions posed were as follows:

- Please tell me about the demographics of the people you serve.
- What do you see as some of their needs, concerns, lifestyle issues, etc.?
- How might a church help meet some of those needs?

I interviewed three individuals including two town officials and another person associated with a local housing organization. A recurring theme that emerged from these interviews is the housing and food insecurity faced by a significant percentage of our local population.

Once we complete surveying the community leaders, we will have a better sense of the needs of the community and hope to use this information to assist us in formulating a vision for the church.

Robert Pu, on behalf of the LRPT

DEACONS

After six long months, we are excited and thrilled to be opening our beautiful sanctuary for in-person worship on July 11. For the summer, we will be using the model we practiced briefly last Autumn, with in-person worship the second Sunday of the month, and via ZOOM the remaining Sundays. We will continue our tradition of union services with area UCC churches the last Sundays of May, June, July, August, and September which, as far as we know at present, will be remote and gathered.

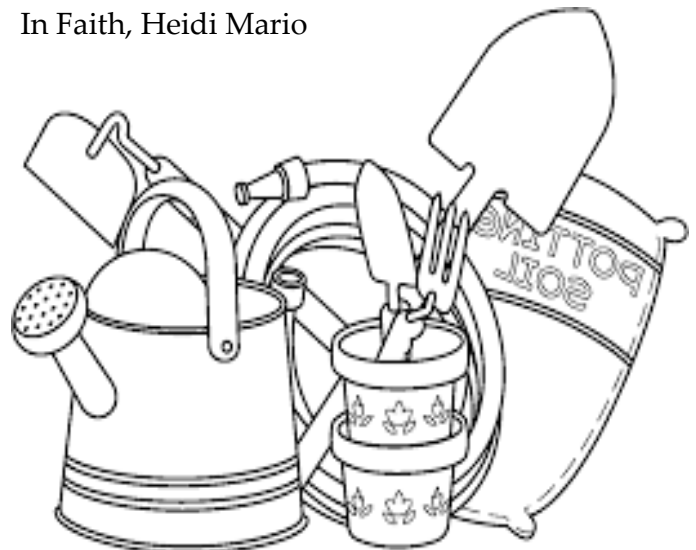
And then—if all goes well—our Grand Re-Opening in September!

We will then begin a hybrid model of worship, as we have discovered positive aspects to continued on-line presence. It has enabled many to join us who otherwise would not have been able to, if living at a distance, with mobility issues, and those uncomfortable yet with being in an indoor, group setting. Welcoming new friends, and re-connecting with old, has been a silver lining to the challenges and loss we have experienced this past year. Modern technology has truly been a blessing to us.

This morning I found tiny fragments, impossibly delicate, like pieces of sky, underneath the outdoor staircase leading to our second floor deck. The robins that have built a nest on the deck supports had hatched their eggs! With mask and gathering mandates eased, and the expectation that, in a few weeks' time, we will be near to returning to ways of life we once took for granted, many of us, I'm sure, will be feeling much like those fragile nestlings, bursting out of our shells at last.

We anticipate your presence at Centre Church with great joy!

In Faith, Heidi Mario



MISSION & SERVICE

Our board has been very focused and hard at work this past month. Being asked by Council to work with our minister, Scott Couper on the \$2,500 Hope Grant through the Vermont Conference's New Ministries Team, we have presented an initial grant proposal to both Council and the New Vermont Conference team. We then organized two ZOOM meetings for all church members and received written comments and suggests from church members. Taking care to listen and work with these ideas, we have researched the needs for this new ministry on our front lawn and brought it to Council's May meeting. In June, the final proposal will be presented to the New Vermont Conference team by Scott. We have, on several occasions in 2021, already started this ministry by creating our February illuminated snow labyrinth, the Holy week celebrations of decorating the Cross and Easter morning's 8:00am service. On May 1, the Brattleboro School of Dance dancers helped us joyfully welcome spring after our cleanup morning, including the lawn, which became the stage.

Copies of the UCC information and our grant proposal are available from Priscilla Svec: 802.387.2373 / psvec48@yahoo.com. We hope that it reflects our church and our efforts to become more inclusive of our town and community members. We hope that a team of church members will lead this new ministry, guided by our church's mission statement, and to organize events for "Centre Green on Main". Please let us know if you have interest in participating in any way, and/or have ideas for this new ministry.

Secondly, Dennis Newman (Chair), and Rennie Washburn (Treasurer) of Loaves & Fishes (L&F) have worked with the L&F Steering Committee to encourage them to become a 501C3. We hope that this new designation will be beneficial for both the church and L&F.

The Second Sunday offerings continue on June 13, and this month will benefit Brattleboro Centre for Children(BCC), the daycare in our basement, and other wonderful uses of the front lawn during the week. This daycare, started over twenty years ago as a mission of our church, has grown and evolved under the direction of Nan Mann and the many church members who have donated time on the board and financial support. Please consider a donation this month for BCC.

Also this month is one of the United Church of Christ's (UCC) 5 for 5 special offerings: *Strengthen*

the Church. This offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the UCC to cooperatively build up the wider church. This offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations, just as it did for us as we began our work with Paul Nickerson. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities.

Our past Second Sunday offerings have been: *One Great Hour of Sharing* (March) \$525; *CASP*(April) \$300; *Summer Lunch Program* (May) \$300.

Thank you to all who have been a part of our church's work through financial giving, attending a meeting re: the New Hope Grant or sending us emails with your thoughts and ideas. All are

BRATTLEBORO CENTRE FOR CHILDREN

June's Second Sunday offering from Mission & Service benefits the Brattleboro Centre for Children (BCC). One of the church's busiest missions, BCC serves families from all walks of life and meets many needs, including early intervention, food for all regardless of income, and quality care for children of working families. Please give what you can and mark your contribution for the benefit of BCC, showing your support for our unsung heroes, the teachers of our youngest children.

Thank you.



Everyone is invited to
CENTRE GREEN
on MAIN
Friday, June 2, 2021

In association with Brattleboro's Gallery Walk, **Tod Roach and Mac Ritchey** will perform music that combines the sounds of the Arabic oud, the Turkish saz, and western guitar with frame drums and other assorted traditional instruments. Their music is influenced by the music of Turkey, Egypt, Brazil, India, Greece, and West Africa. They have been collaborating since 2002 and have played at many venues. Please come join us on the lawn for a fun night of beautiful music. Bring a blanket (we have chairs if you prefer) and do expect some free form dancing.

MEMBER CARE

AM Radio...Bridge Minister

I'm a regular listener of the Keene radio station WKBK 1290 every morning for news, weather, and state and local topics.

Every Friday morning between 10:00am and noon, John McGauley hosts a show featuring a variety of interesting topics or on-air guests. All topics of interest are tackled on Friday mornings. When I learned that the Rev. Dr. Joseph David Stinson was going to be a guest on the second half of the two hour show, I set my schedule to tune in and listen. John McGauley brings up all kinds of topics, and of course by inviting a minister the topic was going to be about religion.

I rummaged around in my late husband's files and found the last sermon preached from the pulpit by David. He preached this before the calling and installation of the Rev. Dr. Scott E. Couper. All those titles and degrees seem long to write when we most commonly call them 'David' and 'Scott'. That informality was not common in my growing up years in the Presbyterian church in Irvington NJ. It was "Rev. Palmer", "Dr. Chambers".

Some of you reading this were not connected with Centre Church in the summer of 2018 and so I will copy here that last paragraph in a sermon David preached as our 'Bridge Minister'

My time with you has been brief, just a little over five months. We've come so far as our original goal: to call a new settled minister. Scott Couper will be your minister and teacher now. I have great hope and confidence in both him and you. I will be looking over the river from another Mt Pisgah to see what happens. I have tried to bring greater faith into the congregation, to point in the right direction. It's a time of excitement for you. But don't stop here. As King David did, bring the Ark of the God into this city. As you do so, do it with joy. People will follow you and celebrate with you. And you will thus fulfil the promise of our ancestors, to Moses, David, Jesus, and founders of this church.

Marion Daley, Member Care



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 May 26.

Alta Barber

13223 N 3937 Dr., Bartlesville, OK 74003

Gary Carrier—Dirigo Pines

c/o Allison Carrier Lucy
16 Page Place, Orono, ME 04473
207.944.0030

Wanda Godfrey—Vernon Hall

13 Greenway Dr., Vernon, VT 05354
802.254.2444

Bob Keller

153 Spruce St., Brattleboro, VT 05301
802.257.4588

Pat Neer—Thompson House

80 Maple St., Brattleboro, VT 05301

Karen Getty Peter—Pine Rock Manor

3 Denny Hill Rd., Warner, NH 03278

Jane Reed—Pine Heights

187 Oak Grove Ave., Brattleboro, VT 05301
802.257.0307

The Rev. Allen Vander Meulen

1 Harvest Circle #301, Lincoln, MA 01773
802.380.0735

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

ANNIVERSARIES

- 25 Julie & Michael Ball
- 26 Peter & Marion Abell
- 28 Rennie & David Washburn



BIRTHDAYS

- 9 Jack Bixby
- 10 Roger Miller
- 12 Carolyn Smith
- 13 Jenifer Ambler
- 14 Ann Reed
- 18 Bob Keller
- 27 Mary Hawkes
- 19 Marion Abell
- 23 Allen Vander Meulen
- 24 Alta Barber
- 26 Morgan Randrup, Jr.



JUNE 2021

**ZOOM events
*Holy Communion

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ⁰⁰ Pub Theology**	2 11 ⁰⁰ Staff Meeting	3 10 ⁰⁰ UCC Devotional** 4 ⁰⁰ Sermon discussion** 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team	4 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 5 ⁰⁰ Gallery Walk	5
6 9 ³⁰ Meditation** 10 ⁰⁰ Worship** ** 12 ⁰⁰ Deacons 1 ⁰⁰ Christian Theology**	7 4 ⁰⁰ BCC Board	8 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ⁰⁰ Pub Theology**	9 11 ⁰⁰ Staff Meeting 6 ⁰⁰ Mission & Service	10 10 ⁰⁰ UCC Devotional** 4 ⁰⁰ Sermon discussion** 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team 7 ⁰⁰ Local Church Discernment	11 CB DEADLINE 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	12
13 9 ³⁰ Meditation** 10 ⁰⁰ Worship** 1 ⁰⁰ Christian Theology**	14	15 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ⁰⁰ Pub Theology**	16 11 ⁰⁰ Staff Meeting 6 ⁰⁰ Council 6 ³⁰ NAACP	17 10 ⁰⁰ UCC Devotional** 4 ⁰⁰ Sermon discussion** 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team	18 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	19 Juneteenth
20 Fathers' Day 9 ³⁰ Meditation** 10 ⁰⁰ Worship** 1 ⁰⁰ Christian Theology**	21 1 ⁰⁰ Compassionate Brattleboro	22 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ⁰⁰ Pub Theology**	23 MAIL CB 11 ⁰⁰ Staff Meeting	24 10 ⁰⁰ UCC Devotional** 4 ⁰⁰ Sermon discussion** 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team	25 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes Scott Vacation	26 Scott Vacation
27 9 ³⁰ Meditation** 10 ⁰⁰ Worship** Scott Vacation	28 Scott Vacation	29 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ⁰⁰ Pub Theology** Scott Vacation	30 Scott Vacation			

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).

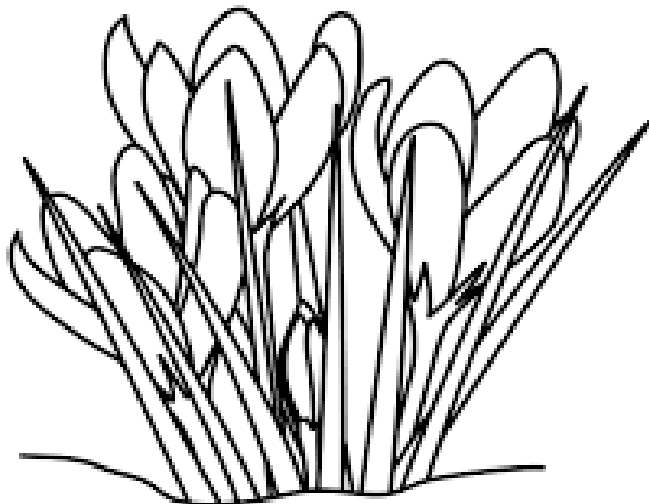
NEW CONTACT INFORMATION

Scott and Stephanie Couper

78 Mumford St.

Douglas, MA 01516

Scott will continue to maintain accommodation in Brattleboro for part of the week (Wednesday through Friday and Sunday). Details to follow.



JUNE LECTIONARY TEXTS

Sunday, June 6, Second Sunday after Pentecost
1 Sam 8:4-11, (12-15), 16-20, (11:14-15); Ps 138; Gen 3:8-15 and Ps 130; 2 Cor 4:13-5:1; **Mk 3:20-35**

Sunday, June 13, Third Sunday after Pentecost
1 Sam 15:34-16:13 and Ps 20; Ezek 17:22-24 and Ps 92:1-4, 12-15; 2 Cor 5:6-10 (11-13), 14-17; **Mk 4:26-34**

Sunday, June 20, Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
1 Sam 17:(1a, 4-11, 19-23),32-49 and Ps 9:9-20 *or*
1 Sam 17:57-18:5, 18:10-16) and Ps 133; Job 38:1-11 and Ps 107:1-3, 23-32; 2 Cor 6:1-13; Mk 4:35-41

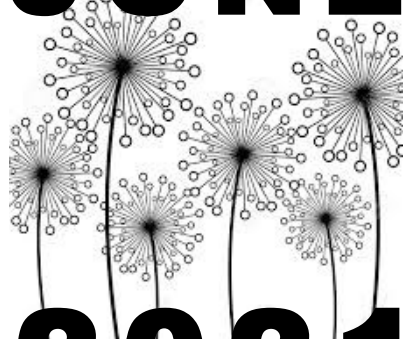
Sunday, June 27, Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
2 Sam 1:1, 17-27 and Ps 130; Wisd of Sol 1:13-15, 2:23-24 *or* Lam 3:22-33; Ps 30; 2 Cor 8:7-15;
Mk 5:21-43



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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@centrechurchvt.org

JUNE

2021

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

Instagram: @centrechurchvt

Current news/information in the larger UCC Community:

VT Conference: www.vtcucc.org / National: www.ucc.org

CHURCH STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

Minister and Teacher: The Rev. Dr. Scott Couper: 786.622.8473 (cell)
centrepastor@centrechurchvt.org

Music Director: Mary Milkey-May: music@centrechurchvt.org

Administrator: Bruce Landenberger: admin@centrechurchvt.org

Financial Secretary: Christine Yost: finance@centrechurchvt.org

Custodian: Emelio McCalla **Council Chair:** Lynn Herzog

Treasurer: Anne Fecto **Clerk:** Jenifer Ambler