MINISTER'S COLUMN, Scott Couper

Friends, I want to share with you a blessing. The blessing comes from one of Centre Church's dearest saints, a mentor of mine, and a great missionary of the Christian Church: The Reverend Allen Myrick. The blessing is a poem he wrote and published entitled "Borrowed Life". As we recognize the saints of the Christian Testament in our current sermon series "Apostolic Martyrs: Sacrifices Made for the Early Church", let us never forget that our own church has apostles. In Greek, apostle (apostoios) means 'an emissary' or 'one who is sent out'. And let us never forget that you are called to be an apostle. You are called to be 'sent out' from Centre Church to Brattleboro and to Vermont and to New Hampshire and to this country and to this world to represent Jesus The Christ and Centre Church as an emissary. Allen's life and vocation was to be an apostle. I would like in this newsletter to send my love and that of the church's to Judy, Allen's precious wife. I would like to thank Barbara St. John for encouraging me to read Allen's work and to 'resurrect it', so to speak, so that we might be again blessed today with his wisdom. May Allen's soul rest in the peace that is God.

Borrowed Life

...all that borrows life from Thee is ever in Thy care. – Isaac Watts

This life we have, we call it ours. Indeed, if we possess one thing it is the self, body and mind. What we think or do or dream surely belongs to us.

But Isaac Watts, he disagrees,
says that life's a loan,
payable we know not when.
It is drawn on God's account,
owed One whose riches underwrite
each day we wake,
each move we make,
each step we take.

So death, when it shall come,
Will be of little consequence:
it simply pays back what's been lent,
returns us to the Life
From whom we've borrowed all.

Thank you, Allen. Love always in Christ, Scott

CENTRE BELLS September 2021

The newsletter of
Centre Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ



Council Chair, LYNN HERZOG

Yes, we talked about COVID. Again. I'm beginning to sound like a broken record. Just as we thought we were on the road to recovery, the Delta variant hit us with a mighty blow. It feels like we are suffering the plagues of Moses – first the frogs, then the flies, then the locusts, then...and we don't have Moses to help us through the Red Sea (Scott's powers don't extend that far). All of which is to say that we will certainly be wearing masks when we get together on September 12 – and we may not get together at all. All the exciting plans for our re-launching - ice cream Sunday, special music, honoring essential workers, blessing of the animals – may have to be put on hold, or adapted to ZOOM. We'll decide which no later than September 6.

But we do have plenty of other things to celebrate. The Tag Sale, organized by St. Michael's Episcopal Church, raised \$7,000 for Loaves & Fishes, taking some of the burden off Centre Church. Loaves & Fishes is in the process of becoming an official charitable organization, so they will be able to apply for grants as well. The Brattleboro Centre for Children, founded by some committed Centre Church members, will be celebrating its 20th anniversary in November with appropriate festivities. The Mission & Service Board will be sending an exceptionally large donation to the children in El Salvador for their educational costs.

Another cause for celebration is that there *will* be a Christian Education program for the children when we re-open. Some very dedicated people will be leading classes for different age groups of children, and they will also provide a Children's Message each Sunday. How wonderful if we had the Children's Choir again! If there are any children in your family, we would love to see them in church.



From Music Director, MARY MILKEY-MAY

During August we enjoyed special music, both vocal and instrumental, provided by Jenifer Ambler, Alison Hale, Matt Kennedy, and Sue Rowell!

I, along with pretty much every choir director I know, am still trying to figure out what will be happening with the choirs in September. Though last month it seemed pretty clear we would be back on track in September, with the Delta variant, that has become more complicated. I'm still hoping the choir will be able to return. It is likely that face masks or shields will be necessary, though.

Stay tuned for some upcoming musical surprises in September!

Addendum: one week later.....

I have surveyed choir members and we plan on meeting on **Thursday**, **September 9** at 5:30pm to prepare music for the 12th. I would invite any other folks who haven't been choir participants yet to come and give it a try. We are figuring out how to make it work. Please come with a mask or a shield and meet us in the choir room!

Reopening News

On Sunday, September 19, as we continue to celebrate our reopening, we will also welcome and celebrate our community's essential workers. Because of the uncertainty of this time regarding COVID, we have a plan which can happen with or without the gathered service. Some time during the week preceding September 19, we will ask you, the congregation if you could bring vases and flowers which can be used to create bouquets for our community's essential workers.

Here's how you can help on the to be determined chosen date: 1) bring vases that are collecting dust in your cupboards and basements to church; 2) bring flowers from your gardens and bring them to church; 3) meet at church and help create the bouquets; 4) attach ribbon and the note from our church; 5) make a delivery or two of these created bouquets.

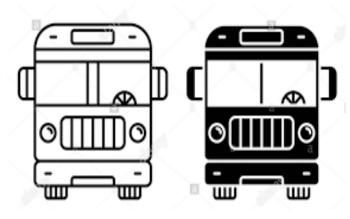
Can you help? Want to have some fun OUT-SIDE together? Please let us know!

Priscilla and Ron Svec

(psvec48@yahoo.com / 802-387-2373)

Karen and Al Rydant

(arydant@gmail.com / 603-256-6374)



DEACONS

August 8 saw our second 'soft' opening of the year, another trial run for our much anticipated Grand Re-launching in September. With the recent surge in the Delta COVID variant, there was discussion beforehand among Deacons and other church leaders whether or not to return to requiring masks for congregants. It was determined to very strongly encourage masking for the near future, and to 'play it by ear' as the situation evolves.

When we do return to weekly in-person worship, we hope to be working with a newly revitalized Christian Education board to more actively integrate our children into the service. Candle lighting, passing the collection plates, and Scripture reading are among many ways kids could take part. And what a joy it would be to have their bright faces among us!

A realignment of roles has occurred on our Board. Joy Everett has agreed to serve as co-chair, so to delegate duties more equitably. As we all know, Joy has served Centre Church graciously and tirelessly in countless ways for many years. We are deeply grateful to Joy, and to all our Deacons for their faithful support and friendship.

Deacons are now hiring! We were delighted to have Kate Maisner Weeks recently join our ranks, and would be over the moon to add another fresh face or two. No experience necessary, will train! (Although being a Centre Church member is required, according to our By-Laws). Okay, so no pay either—unless you count the satisfaction of serving God and our community, learning the mystifying ins and outs of liturgy and worship, caring for our beautiful sanctuary, finding out what's behind that Deacon's closet door (and just what is a narthex, anyway?), and knowing you are a vital component of Centre Church's mission. Contact any of us, anytime (no salesman will call)!

- Heidi Mario, for Deacons

BRATTLEBORO CENTRE FOR CHILDREN

Even though BCC stays open year round, September always feels like the start of a new school year. Some children graduated and left for public school kindergartens. Some children are moving on to other centers or schools. Some children are moving to new classrooms here, and with them some teachers are also switching rooms. After a week of in-service, and a lot of work being done in preparation, it feels new and special. We are also preparing for BCC's 20th anniversary. How amazing it feels that the Center has been here for two decades already! A nice event will be planned and held in November, the month the Center was recognized by the state. Details will follow next month. Thank you, Centre Church, for twenty wonderful years of support of this mission.

- Nan Mann, BCC Director

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

September is Homecoming Month for CE, and we will have a wonderful kick off on **Sunday**, **September 12** with an Ice Cream Social during the Fellowship hour. There will not be church school classes that week, it's just about coming back and getting reacquainted. So we will enjoy a children's message and nursery care will be available. Classes for church school will start on **Sunday**, **September 19**. Then on the 26th there is a Union service, so no worship/classes at CentreChurch. Classes will resume on **Sunday**, **October 3**.

We are excited to be having two class age groups; a younger group—age 3 through 2nd grade, and an older group—3rd through 6/7th grade. Nursery care will be available each week for babies and up to age 3. Families were surveyed this spring and this model fits the needs they shared with us.

We are always interested in volunteers and helpers. If you love children like we do, please contact Nan Mann: 802.380.5231 / nanmann17@gmail.com to learn how you can help our youth flourish.

Sunday Morning Adult Education

Unless the in-person church plans change due to COVID restrictions, on **Sunday**, **September 12** at 9:00am I hope to meet with interested folk for a planning session in the Heritage Room. Please come with book title possibilities and we will discuss a compatible study process.

All are welcome. Invite friends and neighbors!

- Judy Palmer

MISSION & SEVICE

Our summer is coming to a close, but our busy board continues into the fall and you are all a part of it. Our Second Sunday Offerings continue to be a way that our congregation makes a difference for our local and international outreach. The PINS program was the recipient in July and received \$300. Our September recipient is Loaves & Fishes. Regarding Loaves & Fishes (L&F), there is much to report. In addition to celebrating this mission with our Second Sunday Offering, we are also thankful for our 'new' partners in this mission, St Michael's Episcopal Church. For over 15 years, Ruth Tilghman and others from St Michael's have organized, cooked and cleaned for L&F. In July a group of people from this parish held a Linens/Clothing Sale for L&F which netted \$7,000, including one large donation. This is very welcomed as Loaves & Fishes moves back into the kitchen following the plumbing work. We thank all that volunteered at the sale and through the last few months' disruption in the kitchen as the work was done. They have been very flexible as they have continued to prepare the over 400 meals each week. A HUGE Thanks to Dart Everett for his tireless work with plumbers, the town, the many workers and L&F to insure that the kitchen was usable once again!

Also to note is L&F's incorporated status which is one step closer to reaching its nonprofit status. With this new standing, L&F will be able to raise the funds needed to cover the utilities used and the other costs of running the program. Grants and fund raisers will be more easily attained. Many thanks to Bob Pu and Rennie Washburn for their work in making this happen.

In the coming weeks, funds for Luz del Mundo scholarships will be delivered to Cabanitas. This Fall we are able to forward \$800 toward books and learning supplies as well as \$1,700 for direct scholarships. We owe a great thank-you to those who contributed to the Holy Week 'Flower the Cross' project and to Jesse Lepkoff, who brought beautiful Baroque music to our sanctuary and our community through Trio Amphion. Through these events and our Second Sunday Offering, we have achieved this support of the scholarship program and our sister parish in El Salvador. We hope that we can invite Jesse to return next summer for another amazing concert. We were so pleased to be able to have this live music with over 80 people present and to be in our church. It was a wonderful evening and we hope that you all can enjoy it next summer!

As we pray for a healthy opportunity to relaunch in September, we look forward to continuing our mission and our service here in Brattleboro and beyond, and are encouraged by new opportunities.

In closing, we want to thank all who have made such a difference for others in the last few months through their work for Centre Church:

Bob Pu, Rennie Washburn, Dennis Newman (Loaves & Fishes)

Dart Everett

(Organizing and overseeing the work in repairing the plumbing in the kitchen)

Jesse Lepkoff, Peter Sykes, Sarah Cunningham (Trio Amphion)

Micah and Scott Couper, Dennis Newman, Jenifer Ambler, Bruce Landenberger, Priscilla Svec (Concert for Luz del Mundo)

Charlene Kemp, Liz Vick from St Michael's; Dennis Newman, Bonnie Girvan, Margo Neale, Scott Couper from Centre Church (Linens/Clothing Sale for L&F)

Margo Neale

(BDCC Refugee Resettlement initiative)

Heidi Mario, Jenifer Ambler (Parlor/Coffee Hour recycling system)

Bonnie Girvan, Jenifer Ambler (Green at Centre Gallery Walk events)

Refugee Resettlement Initiative

At a recent meeting of the Mission & Service Board, Margo Neale provided a report on a pilot program sponsored locally by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) which would welcome Ethiopian refugees to live and work in our community. The hope, on the part of BDCC, is that the refugees, once resettled, would fill employment gaps in our area. The program is supported financially by the federal government. Various groups in our community such as the Board of Selectmen, World Learning and SIT, the Community Asylum Seekers Project, and St. Michael's Episcopal Church have endorsed the program and would welcome the refugees.

Housing for the refugees remains the largest single problem. Alex Beck, Manager of Welcoming Communities at the BDCC, is currently working with the Windham and Windsor Housing Trust to determine where housing might be found.

While resettling refugees requires attention and support initially, communities across our country have benefited from their presence. We expect that to be the case in Brattleboro that has a history of welcoming diversity and viewing differences as conducive to vitality and growth. It is our hope that we at Centre Church can find ways to be supportive of this project.

Margo Neale

Everyone is invited to

The GREEN at CENTRE Friday, September 3, Gallery Walk



Andy Davis plays New England traditional music as well as Irish, Scottish, and Québecois with his fiddler friend Laurie Indenbaum. Andy is one of the choir directors at Guilford Community Church, UCC.

Andy and Laurie have performed at many events at Centre Church over the years for Martin Luther King Day and other interfaith events. They have played many times at the Farmers Market and at the River Garden. Andy taught music in area schools for over thirty years and now find themselves wanting to do more community events. Laurie and Andy play a very joyful repertoire of fiddle tunes, original songs and folk songs. Their music goes well on Main Street, especially on the lawn in front of Centre Church.

In association with Brattleboro's Gallery Walk, please come join us on the lawn for a fun night of beautiful music. Bring a blanket (we have chairs if you prefer).



LOAVES & FISHES

St. Michael's Episcopal Church raises nearly \$7,400 for Loaves and Fishes

BRATTLEBORO—The St. Michael's Episcopal Church's tag sale team reports that their July 17 "Un-Tag Sale" raised \$7,363 for Loaves & Fishes, a food outreach program based at Centre Congregational Church and managed by St. Michael's parishioner Ruth Tilghman.

"The original goal for the fundraiser was \$3,000," sale coordinator Elizabeth Vick said in a news release. Donations at the clothing and linens event were \$2,708; additional donations brought the grand total to far beyond that.

The funds will help cover costs of Loaves & Fishes' utilities and to buy the program a new commercial dishwasher.

"It took the work of many volunteers to make this event such a success," Vick said. The tag sale team had been meeting on ZOOM and working since January to make the event happen.

"With the pandemic looming, no one knew what could really happen until Covid vaccinations became available in March," said Vick, thanking the staff, volunteers, shoppers, and donors.

[Originally published in *The Commons issue #625* (Wednesday, August 11, 2021). *Town and Village*]



ANNUAL NON-WELCOME CENTER FUNDRAISER

Dear Friends and Members:

Our Church needs your help. We are holding a Non-Welcome Center fundraising effort starting on July 1, 2021. Instead of baking for days on end, and making enough sandwiches to feed the world, we are asking everyone to contribute money directly to the church. We have done this in the past and have always received the money to reach our goal.

As everyone knows, the last eighteen months have been difficult, especially for the Fundraising Committee, because we were isolated and non-functional. NOW is the time to make up our losses, reach into our pockets, and help.

Please make payments to this effort with a note that your contribution is earmarked for the *Centre Church Non-Welcome Center Event*. We are hoping to reach our goal of \$3,000 before the end of the summer.

We thank you for your effort on behalf of our wonderful congregation.

Sincerely, the Fundraising Committee

LONG-RANGE PLANNING TEAM

On July 20, 2021, after months of discussion, the LRPT adopted the following as the **Purpose Statement** for Centre Church:

Centre Church's purpose is to be a faith community fostering *belonging*, *believing*, and *becoming* that which God intends.

This past week we had two additional meetings and agreed to tweak the **Purpose Statement** to read:

Centre Church's purpose is to be a faith community fostering *belonging*, *believing*, and *becoming* all that God intends.

We believe this **Purpose Statement** is broad enough to cover the primary work of our church, clear enough so that members of the congregation as well as members of the community will understand it, and memorable enough so that members can easily recall it.

We are currently making plans for the weekend of **October 8 – 10**, when The Rev. Paul Nickerson will be with us. We plan to have a potluck supper on Friday, a meeting on Saturday led by Paul, as he helps us develop a **Vision Statement** that will be a description of what our church will look like when we live out our purpose as stated in our **Purpose Statement**. On Sunday morning Paul will be preaching from the pulpit. All members and friends of the church are encouraged to attend as many of these functions as possible and to share any thoughts or suggestions you might have with members of the LRPT on how we can utilize Paul's talents when he is with us in October.

Robert Pu on behalf of the LRPT

PEOPLE

ANNIVERSARIES



5 Addison & Adelaide Minott

BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Alex Day Emma Day
- 4 Gary Carrier
- 6 Mary Robertson
- 10 Jim Bedard
- 17 Elizabeth Fecto
- 18 Gisela Robeck
- 23 Joy Everett
- **29** Rebecca Day



NEW FRIENDS OF CENTRE CHURCH

Beth & John Crutcher

PO Box 500, 10 Long Walk Saxtons River, VT 05154 802.3791585

bethanncrutcher@gmail.com jcrutcher@gmail.com



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.



**ZOOM events

*Holy Communion

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 11 ⁰⁰ Staff Meeting Bruce vacation	2 10 ⁰⁰ UCC Devotional** 4 ⁰⁰ Sermon discussion** 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team Bruce vacation	3 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 5 ⁵⁰ Gallery Walk / Green at Centre Bruce vacation	4
5 10 ^{oo} Worship* ** 12 ^{oo} Deacons' meeting 1 ^{oo} Christian Theology**	6 LABOR DAY OFFICE CLOSED	7 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ⁹⁰ Pub Theology**	8 11 ^{oo} Staff Meeting 4 ^{oo} BCC Board 6 ^{oo} Mission & Service	9 10 ⁰⁰ UCC Devotional** 4 ⁰⁰ Sermon discussion** 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit 5 ³⁰ Choir rehearsal 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team	10 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	11
12 900 Adult Education 930 Meditation-chapel 1000 Worship sanctuary 1130 Ice Cream Social 1200 LRPT meeting 100 Christian Theology 300 Michael Mario Installation service	13	14 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ⁰⁰ Pub Theology**	15 11 [®] Staff Meeting 6 [®] Church Council 6 [®] NAACP	16 10 [®] UCC Devotional** 4 [®] Sermon discussion** 4 [®] Women's Spirit 5 [®] Choir rehearsal 7 [®] Worship Team	17 CB DEADLINE 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	18
19 9 ³⁰ Meditation-chapel 10 ⁹⁰ Worship sanctuary 1 ⁹⁰ Christian Theology	20 1 ^{oo} Compassionate Brattleboro	21 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ⁹⁰ Pub Theology**	22 11 ⁰⁰ Staff Meeting	23 10 [®] UCC Devotional** 4 [®] Sermon discussion** 4 [®] Women's Spirit 5 [®] Choir rehearsal 7 [®] Worship Team	24 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes	25
26 9 ³⁰ Meditation-chapel 10 ⁰⁰ Worship sanctuary 1 ⁰⁰ Christian Theology	27	28 11 ³⁰ Loaves & Fishes 7 ⁹⁰ Pub Theology**	29 MAIL CB 11 ^{oo} Staff Meeting	30 10 ⁰⁰ UCC Devotional** 4 ⁰⁰ Sermon discussion** 4 ³⁰ Women's Spirit 5 ³⁰ Choir rehearsal 7 ⁰⁰ Worship Team		

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).

Do You Know Your Hymns?

Dentist's Hymn . . . Crown Him with Many Crowns.

Weatherman's Hymn . . There Shall Be Showers of Blessings.

Contractor's Hymn . . . The Church's One Foundation.

Tailor's Hymn . . . Holy, Holy, Holy.

Golfer's Hymn . . . There's a Green Hill Far Away.
Politician's Hymn . . . Standing on the Promises!
Optometrist's Hymn . . . Open My Eyes That I Might See.

IRS Agent's Hymn . . . 1 Surrender All.
Gossip's Hymn . . . Pass It On.
Electrician's Hymn . . . Send The Light...
Shopper's Hymn . . . Sweet Bye and Bye.

Realtor's Hymn . . . I've Got a Mansion, Just Over the Hilltop.

Massage Therapist's Hymn. He Touched Me.

AND for those who speed on the highway - a few hymns:

55 mph . . . God Will Take Care of You
75 mph . . . Nearer My God To Thee
85 mph . . . This World Is Not My Home
95 mph . . Lord, I'm Coming Home
100 mph . . . Precious Memories

Give me a sense of humor, Lord, Give me the grace to see a joke, To get some humor out of life, And pass it on to other folks.

SEPTEMBER LECTIONARY TEXTS

Sunday, September 5, 15th Sunday after Pentecost Prov 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23 and Ps 125; Isa 35:4-7a and Ps 146; James 21:1-10, (11-13), 14-17; **Mk 7:24-37**

Sunday, September 12, 16th Sunday after Pentecost Prov 1:20-33 and Ps 19; Isa 50:4-9a and Ps 116:1-9 *or Wisd of Sol 7:26-8:1*; James 3:1-12; **Mk 8:27-38**

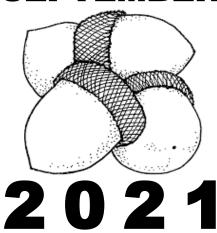
Sunday, September 19, 17th Sunday after Pentecost Prov 31:10-31 and Ps 1; Wisd of Sol 1:16-2:1, 12-22 *or Jer 11:18-20* and Ps 54; James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a; **Mk 9:30-37**

Sunday, September 26, 18th Sunday after Pentecost **Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22** and Ps 124; Num 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29 and Ps 19:7-14; James 5:13-20; Mk 9:38-50

Centre Bells is published monthly by Centre Congregational Church, UCC



SEPTEMBER



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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

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Website: www.centrechurchvt.org

Facebook: Centre Congregational Church-Brattleboro VT

Instagram: @centrechurchvt

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

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Council Chair: Lynn Herzog

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