

## INTERIM MINISTER'S COLUMN: Rev. Bert Marshall

Dear Centre Church Friends,

In the interest of transparency and maximum clarity, I am reproducing here a notice I sent recently to many of our members via email:

I've been doing a lot of thinking and discernment work around the search and call process here at Centre Church, and my role as your interim pastor. I know there's been some confusion about the options, in terms of how long I would remain here, under what circumstances, etc. As best I can understand it, one source of the confusion has been the possibility of extending my ministry here in a re-defined role such as "designated-term pastor" or "transitional pastor," something like that. Such an extension was actually discussed and had been considered for a time as a viable option, although it was also dependent upon certain circumstances related to the progress of the search, my availability and willingness to stay longer, and of course the wishes of the congregation. It was an option that had some appeal to me because I love Centre Church and the prospect of sticking around a little longer seemed like a good idea and a good match.

On the other hand, holding out that option seems to have injected some uncertainty and lack of clarity into the search process, along with perhaps some untenable expectations for some, perhaps many of you. In addition, this year I have begun to feel that maybe my work here is drawing to a close, that I have accomplished all that I can. I believe we've done some good ministry here. I'm grateful for your love and support, your encouragement and faithfulness, the good and the bad, the ups and downs, all of it. But I think it's time to move on, and it's time for you to find that new settled pastor who can be with you for much longer than I can - someone who can help you grow and flourish into the coming years. That seems to be the best option.

So, on Friday (Aug. 4) I sent a notice to the church council and the chair of the search committee, informing them that I will not extend my time here beyond the end of my current contract, which concludes at the end of February 2018. That will mark three years since my arrival at Centre Church. Meanwhile, I look forward to seven more months of work and ministry with you.

Thank you for everything!

I want you all to know that this was not an easy decision. And I feel a sadness about it that will most likely increase as next February draws near. It has been a gift and a blessing to be part of this congregation's life during my time here. I'm grateful for what we've accomplished, and thankful for all the kindnesses that have been extended while I've been your interim pastor. I still strongly believe that there is great potential here for a thriving church on Main Street in downtown Brattleboro. I pray that you will find your path.



Grace & Peace,

Rev. Bert

### **CENTRE BELLS**

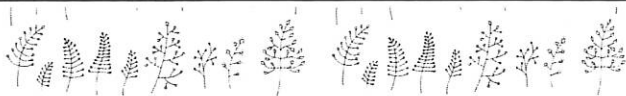
The Newsletter of  
**Centre Congregational Church,  
United Church of Christ**  
**September 2017**

## From Council Chair, MATT KENNEDY

It's September, which means that summer is coming to an end and it's time for kids to head back to school. It also means that it's time for Sunday School and Faith in Action to start up again, and we could use your help. The Christian Education committee is looking for people interested in helping, either once in a while or on a recurring basis. If you'd like to lend a hand see James Cera or Logan Lefebvre.

Also, in May, the Council held a Financial Brainstorm Session to develop ideas for gathering support for Centre's financial needs. By the end of the morning we had lists of ideas Centre might pursue in three main areas: Within the Congregation, Greater Brattleboro Community, Other/Broader Resources. The lists also included names of people who were interested in helping with specific ideas. Unfortunately, not everyone was able to make the meeting, and some of the stickies that people had added to indicate their interest in helping with a particular idea fell off before we had the opportunity to collate the lists. If you would like a copy of the lists to see if there is an item you would like to help with you can pick up a copy in the church office or contact Hilary and she can email you one. If you have an idea, or would like to help with any item, simply contact a Council member.

So as summer comes to a close I hope that everyone has had an opportunity spend some quality time with their families. I'm looking forward to getting back to our church family spending time together.



## The Centre Church Fundraising Committee Announces Its ANNUAL ALTERNATIVE WELCOME CENTER EVENT:

Dear Friends, Since we were not awarded an actual date for the Welcome Center, we are asking for monetary donations equal to or greater than the food or time you would have donated to this Church wide event. Checks or cash can be sent to the church, or put in with the weekly offering. However . . . please mark them for the Welcome Center Event. Thank you for supporting this alternative to being at the Welcome Center. The Church is counting on your donations for this important fundraiser. Thank you!

## From Music Director, MARY MILKEY-MAY

### MUSIC NOTES

I would like to remind everyone that on **Sunday, August 27**, we will be having a pick-up choir which will hopefully include members from the other congregations as well as from our own. For anyone who would like to join us, please come at 9:00 A.M for a rehearsal before church. Even if you don't usually sing in the choir, we'd love to have you join us for that Sunday! You might decide you'd like to stay!

As we are now approaching the end of summer, I'd like to thank the folks who stepped up to present special music while the choir was absent. First off, the following folks sang solos for the anthem and/or offertory: Jenifer Ambler, Stephanie Cary, Tony Grobe, Bert Marshall and Greg Sweeney. Thanks to all of these singers, the music chosen covered a wide variety of styles, each enjoyable in its own way. The following folks presented instrumental music, often times included in the Preludes and Postludes. Thanks go to the following instrumentalists: Alison Hale, flute; Philip Bloch, violin and piano; Matt Kennedy, clarinet, recorder, and trumpet; and Bert Marshall, guitar. Also, on Labor Day Sunday, you will be treated to special music from Lynn Herzog's recorder group. Thanks to all of you for your contribution to our summer music!

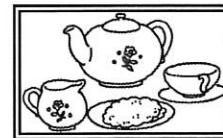
The choir will be back in the swing beginning on **Thursday, September 7**, with our rehearsal from 7:00-8:30 PM. We will be singing the following Sunday, September 10. Please strongly consider joining this wonderful group. We could really use some new voices as two of our singers (Mike and Julie) moved. Who will help fill the void???????



## BOARD FOR MEMBER CARE

### New Coffee Hour Schedule

Making this list is a task we on Member Care do every year. It is challenging as we try to spread the responsibility over the several committees and boards of our church. This year there is a special problem as the Bicentennial Committee, who hosted coffee hour last September, no longer exists. The Christian Education Board, who used to have September, is down to two people.



What to do?

As 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.

**GOOD NEWS** just came in as I am writing this that there will be an Ice Cream Social on the second Sunday in September. We're pretty sure Anne Fecto's scrumptious chocolate sauce will be one of the toppings!

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 Fair Trade Coffee.

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

September <sup>1</sup>	Open	March	Council
October	Deacons	April	Pastoral Relations / Peace & Justice
November	Pastoral Search Committee	May	Fundraising Committee
December	Mission & Service	June <sup>2</sup>	Building & Grounds
January	Choir	July <sup>3</sup>	Member Care
February	Finance and Endowment Committees	August <sup>3</sup>	Member Care

1. Except for C.E. Ice Cream Sunday (9/10)
2. First and Third Sundays only
3. Lemonade on the Lawn

### How to Host Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour has been a Sunday morning tradition here at Centre Church for many years. Those who have done it in the past know how to go about it. We'll write some simple guidelines here. This is not to say that it is a simple job. Two or better three people are needed to set up serve and clean up.



In the kitchenette you will find Fair Trade coffee; tea, sugar, and sweeteners are also there.

You will need to bring 2 quarts of juice for the children's table, 1 quart of homogenized milk or coffee cream. Providing snacks is optional. Some people bring cookies, crackers, and cheese.

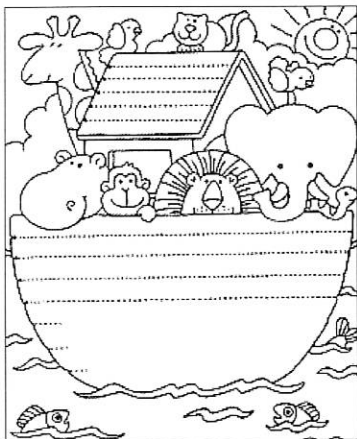
Plan to set up before church. The coffee urn takes about 1 hour to percolate. The proportions of coffee needed are posted inside the white wooden cabinet on the wall. You can prepare tea early as it will stay hot in the thermal pitchers. Use 3 tea bags for each pitcher.

Juice for the children can be set up on a separate card table usually close to the piano. There is an underpad to protect the parlor table in the large drawer with the other tablecloths.

Those who have done this find that it can be fun, and a time to socialize. Your willingness to host is much appreciated as you provide a time for fellowship for many.

## BRATTLEBORO CENTRE FOR CHILDREN

September is usually the "start" of a school year, but since Centre for Children operates year-round, it can sometimes feel like an awkward start. However, we do plan for changes from August to September, and it is a new beginning in some ways. We closed for a week at the end of August as we do every year, for in service for the teachers. We said farewell to six children who headed off to Kindergarten and that made space in the preschool for us to move up some of our oldest toddlers and younger children too. For those children, it really is a new beginning: a new room, new teachers, new classmates, and for their parents too. We spent many days in August preparing the children by having them visit their new classrooms and get to know the space, materials, and people they will soon see daily.



Something extra special happened on the playground during in service week too! The fundraising campaign of last December raised enough money for us to make the purchase of the "BCC Friend Ship", a large wooden playground structure shaped like a boat (perhaps the church school children can act out Noah's Ark on it on Sundays!) with a slide, a gang-plank, a rock wall and a canopy for shade. It is manufactured by the Amish and shipped north to Vermont where we had it installed and built by professional builders. We want to thank everyone who donated to that campaign because we have something truly special for our children to play on now. Check it out sometime as you walk by!

Nan Mann, Director  
Brattleboro Centre for Children

## SEARCH COMMITTEE

Through the summer our Search Committee continues to meet weekly. Our thanks to committees allowing us to use the Parlor on meeting nights too! We found this room to have the best wireless internet connection for us. We are working in Google Docs. This allows us to brainstorm together and make the document changes as we work, with everyone seeing the changes in real time.

At the time you read this, we expect to have the profile team doing a final re-writing of the Profile. Soon after we will make the Profile available for reading by our church family. When we complete creating the Profile, we will begin the next leg of this journey. We continue to work with the Vermont Conference in this faith driven process. Please continue to pray for the Search Committee, our work and our Centre Church Family.

Everyone is invited to the  
**MOMENT for PEACE**  
Friday, September 1•5:30-6:00PM  
Centre Church Parlor

**Songs for Peace.** Rev. Bert Marshall, Interim Pastor at Centre Congregational Church, will offer some original songs, lead some group singing, and offer a few brief reflections.



## BOARD FOR MISSION & SERVICE

The **Second Sunday Offering** for September (9/10) will be Carry Me Home, the charity hosted by Centre Church which uses the stage in Memorial Hall to sort and ship clothing to Syrian refugees in Eastern Europe. Since many refugees flee the Syrian war with few belongings, and end up in a colder part of the world than they started from, the demand is huge, especially for fall/winter clothes and children's clothes. Keep your eyes open for the October Centre Bells for details on another special fundraiser on October 6!



**FROM KART! Welcome New Kitchen Appliances:** Rachael Ray, step aside. Julia Child and James Beard, look down from above; Martha Stewart, come stir a pot. These chefs supreme have created epicurean history and would be happy to come and see the new Centre Church kitchen renovations. A year or so ago, our church's SISP team used ideas and data from local architectural firm Stevens and Associates to assess our needs and determine how we might best use our existing kitchen space. They consulted with local restaurateurs and commercial restaurant suppliers to create an affordable, workable design. This meant replacing a decades-old gas range, a residential refrigerator and an old freezer. Along with very generous donations from several church members, friends who were actively committed to Loaves & Fishes, St. Michael's Church, and some grant money, the church was able to purchase the replacement equipment so badly needed to make food storage and preparation easier.



A new six-burner Vulcan gas range and a separate gas convection oven replace the decades old range, which was transported to a location in New Hampshire where another organization put it to good use. Through the recent efforts of Mission and Service, the Fundraising Committee and other church members, more community suppers have taken place and more are being planned for the future.

Loaves and Fishes volunteers from our church and St. Michael's Episcopal Church prepare nutritious meals every Tuesday and Friday throughout the year. These hot meals are created from food donated from local stores, the Vermont Foodbank, and many individuals. Several other mornings, volunteers store staples that are delivered. In addition to the regular clients, children from Centre for Children are fed and many takeout meals are distributed to individuals and families in need of food during the weekends.

## Loaves and Fishes

*Ray*

At every serving, Ray comes in after the first rush of diners. He stands patiently with his arthritic hands folded in front of him. He always says, "Could I have one to go Ma'am." I once suggested that he might like to stay and eat and be with others. "I'm embarrassed to eat because of no teeth," he replied. So, each day at service he comes in and asks for one to go. He begins to talk a bit more. "I can eat two meals from all you give me!" "Thought I had skin cancer for 6 months. My father died of skin cancer. When I finally saw a doctor, he gave me an antibiotic for 14 days. Boy do I feel stupid but in 14 days I'm cured!" One day he handed me a folded check. I thanked him, put it in my pocket as I was serving. After service, I opened the check. Laboriously written with his arthritic hands was a \$10 check made out to Loaves and Fishes and in the "for" space at the bottom was written for "kindness."

Ruth Tilghman, July 25, 2017

Please stop by and take a peek into the kitchen. More ideas for improvement and more volunteers are always welcome. Special thanks and appreciation to everyone who contributed both ideas, time, effort, and funds to make these improvements a reality.



Local appreciation to all the hard working Loaves & Fishes volunteers under the indefatigable leadership of both Bob Oeser and Ruth Tilghman. And thanks to Bill Daley of Vermont Deli (Sylvia Eaton's son-in-law) and Tristan Toleno of Entera Artisanal Catering (Don and Bev Webster's son-in-law) who offered some kitchen planning advice; Jon Saccocchio of Stevens & Associates; and Joe Gattunella of Gillette Kitchen Equipment and Lisa and Matt Vose for removal and relocation of the old range. And a big thanks to Dart Everett, who coordinated the installation. ~Marion Abell

## *Hello, church family!*

I am writing to let you all know that I have resigned from the board of Christian Education. I have taken a full-time teaching job at Neighborhood School-house starting this fall, and will also be taking a college course, and therefore don't have time to devote to continuing the children's program. I've been helping to facilitate a wonderful program for our kids for two years, with lots of help from many of you.

Now we need your help again. James Cera and Logan Lefebvre have been doing the C.E. board with me, but they can't do it alone. A two-person committee is very challenging! I've been organizing volunteers for Faith in Action, helping people gather supplies, and coming up with ideas for the kids. We need another person who can fill this role, and/or start another type of Sunday school.

I know how busy so many of you are, working hard to sustain and build the life of the church. But if someone out there reads this and thinks they might have a little time to give to the children, please be in touch. I'd be happy to talk with you more about what this role entails. Thank you! *Abi Healey*

## **New Contact Information**

**Marilyn and Arnold Young** have a new address ~ **34 Pine Street, Springfield, VT 05156** ~ and a new great-granddaughter! **Elissa and Andrew Fraser** welcomed a daughter, **Izabella Lois Gray Fraser**, on July 7; she is also the granddaughter of **Susan and Christopher Gray**, all of Springfield, Vermont.

**Sue Bowman, Marty Fenn's** sister, may be contacted at [sueobowman@gmail.com](mailto:sueobowman@gmail.com), or 83B Fairview Road, Greenfield, MA 01301-9654.

**Stephanie Cary** has a new landline number: 802-254-3654; her email is [carysing1@gmail.com](mailto:carysing1@gmail.com).

**Cynthia MacMillin** has a new email address: [cmacmillin@myfairpoint.net](mailto:cmacmillin@myfairpoint.net).

As of August 31, **Bill and Carlene McCarty's** new address is:

P.O. Box 337  
104 Gateway Drive  
Chesterfield, NH 03443



**Brown Bag Lunch Group** The first Wednesday always comes up so quickly, but in September, it will fall on the 6th. Bring your sandwich and join the group for an hour of conversation at noon in the church parlor.

## **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 23.

### **DON WEBSTER**

50 Highlawn Road  
Brattleboro, VT 05301 257-1434

### **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**

Vernon Hall, 13 Greenway Dr.,  
Vernon, VT 05354 254-2444

### **PHYLLIS HICKOK**

1520 Little Blue Stem Ct.  
Ames, IA 50014 (515)292-9196

### **ROBERT & JANE REED**

461 Grafton Rd., #201  
Townshend, VT 05353 (802)221-4213

### **KAREN GETTY PETER**

Langdon Place, 136 Arch Street, Room 152  
Keene, NH 03431 (603)357-3902

*Please let Hilary know if we've missed someone.*

The memorial service for Martha (Marty) Fenn is **Saturday, September 16, at 2:00 p.m.**, Centre Congregational Church.



Thank you to **Heidi Mario and Margo Neale** for tending Centre's gardens so faithfully, and with such beautiful results. Their efforts brighten not only any visit to the church, but any trip down our stretch of Main Street.

## **WOMEN'S SPIRIT . . .**

By the time you read this the group, who are reading Stephen Prothero's *GOD IS NOT ONE*, will have finished studying the first 4 politically significant religions in the world and will either be in the midst or finishing up on Buddhism. The group meets at **4:30 every Thursday** in the church library and all are welcome whether you have the book or not.



# SEPTEMBER 2017

\*Holy Communion celebrated

					1 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 2 <sup>30</sup> Charter for Compassion 5 <sup>30</sup> Moment for Peace 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	2
3 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	4 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> <b>Labor Day</b>	5 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 5 <sup>30</sup> Search Committee 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	6 12 <sup>00</sup> Brown Bag Lunch	7 10 <sup>00</sup> BWC Rehearsal 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 7 <sup>00</sup> Choir Rehearsal	8 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	9
10 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship* 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	11 4 <sup>30</sup> Prayer Shawl 7 <sup>30</sup> AA District 8	12 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 5 <sup>30</sup> Search Committee 6 <sup>00</sup> Meeting Night 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	13 3 <sup>30</sup> Fundraising Committee	14 10 <sup>00</sup> BWC Rehearsal 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 7 <sup>00</sup> Choir Rehearsal	15 12 <sup>30</sup> Centre Bells deadline 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	16 2 <sup>00</sup> Service for Martha (Marty) Fenn
17 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	18 10 <sup>00</sup> BWC Rehearsal 4 <sup>30</sup> Prayer Shawl	19 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 5 <sup>30</sup> Search Committee 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	20 12 <sup>30</sup> BAIL	21 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 7 <sup>00</sup> Choir Rehearsal	22 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	23
24 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	25 4 <sup>30</sup> Prayer Shawl 7 <sup>00</sup> Spiritual Conversations	26 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 5 <sup>30</sup> Search Committee 6 <sup>00</sup> Church Council 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	27 Centre Bells mailed	28 10 <sup>00</sup> BWC Rehearsal 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 7 <sup>00</sup> Choir Rehearsal	29 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	30

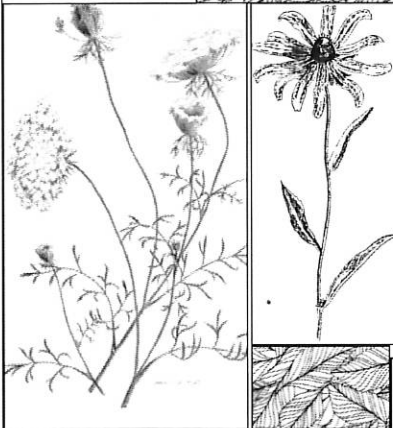
## ANNIVERSARIES

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



## 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



## September Lectionary Texts:

- 3 Ex 3:1-15•Ps 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b or Jer 15:15-21 • Ps 26:1-8•Rom 12:9-21•Matt 16:21-28
- 10 Ex 12:1-14•Ps 149 or Ezek 33:7-11•Ps 119:33-40• Rom 13:8-14•Matt 18:15-20
- 17 Ex 14:19-31•Ps 114 or Ex 15:1b-11, 20-21 or Gen 50:15-21•Ps 103:(1-7), 8-13•Rom 14:1-12• Matt 8:21-35
- 24 Ex 16:2-15•Ps 105:1-6, 37-45 or Jon 3:10-4:11•Ps 145:1-8•Phil 1:21-30•Matt 20:1-16

**HAPPY LABOR DAY**

**REMEMBER**  
THE DIGNITY OF WORK

HONORING AMERICAN WORKERS



## Centre Bells

is published monthly by

**Centre Congregational Church, UCC**

News items and articles, address changes, or requests to be added or removed from the *Centre Bells* mailing list should be submitted to the administrative assistant at: 802-254-4730/  
centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org



"I am thankful for small mercies; I compared notes with one of my friends who expects everything of the universe, and is disappointed when anything is less than the best, and I found that I begin at the other extreme, expecting nothing, and am always full of thanks for moderate goods." ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

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

**Office Hours:** M - F: 8:30am — 12:30pm

**Church Office:** (802) 254-4730 / [centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org](mailto:centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org)

**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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Music Director  
Administrative Assistant  
Sextons  
Financial Secretary

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Council Chair  
Treasurer / Clerk

Matt Kennedy  
Holly Kennedy / Constance Bresnahan



**SEPTEMBER**

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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