

The Scroll

Newsletter of
Union Church of Proctor

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Check out the full color version of the Scroll on line at the web address above... lots more about the church there, too!



Jay Burt, *Walk Softly Photos*

February 2024

Matthew 6:25-27 (New International Version)
²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life[c]?”

Dear Friends,

The start of the new year has certainly moved quickly. I know, I know, the same amount of time passes each day, and yet, it doesn't feel that way. When there are reports to write, sermons to prepare, and in my brain, past-due pastoral care to catch up on after a hectic Advent, Christmas, and New Year's, time seems to be very thin with minutes not having 60 seconds but 30 and hours in turn half the usual amount.

It's in these times of rush rush rush that I get a little reminder of how precious time is. For example, like time spent with folks so precious to

us, a milestone accomplished, the joy of needing an oil change (seriously) that reminds you of how far you have gone since the last one. As the deadline for this February Scroll approached, I was sitting in a waiting room for my car to be serviced. Ready myself for a couple of hours wait, I thought, what a good time it would be to get caught up on some work and perhaps even get ahead.

Instead, of completing my immediate vision of finishing a sermon, or writing a report, a photo popped up on my screen. The picture, which turned into viewing many pictures of past happenings all taken around this same time across many years. My Apple Photos program is good about sharing picture memories with me like that, unfortunately, too often I don't stop to look. This day, I did. I had to ask myself how long ago some of the pictures were taken. Most of the pictures were nothing particularly special other than I remembered the joy in each one. Some showed people that are no longer physically embodying this earth. Other pictures were just landscape shots, or of food and meals, shared and prepared. (I do like to take food pictures!)

The point is that each one of these pictures taken in January throughout the years caused me to pause and give thanks. In my pausing, time stopped moving so very quickly. The perspective shift wasn't about time standing still or me feeling like I was "going back in time." The shift in how time felt currently was about remembering that I don't need to let the ways of the world be my reality. I don't need to let deadlines and "have to" obligations define the quality of my life. That quality of life for me is determined through love, faith, and a desire to be present with myself, other people, and God's creations. Not one of the pictures made me happy because I had become more powerful, gained more things, or was about anything worldly. The pictures that allowed me to feel a part of the natural flow of time reminded me of how grateful I am to be part of love, fun, beauty, silly, weird - just to be present.

In those moments when time was passing in a more regular feeling fashion, the article was written, the deadline wasn't so daunting and the focus became more about the presence and not regret or fear. Perhaps that's just it - when I let worry rule me, time is no longer my ally. Time literally "runs away" from me and I can't stay on a track that feels like I accomplish anything. When I take the time to give thanks, to take each moment to its fullest by letting go and just being present, I have more time to enjoy my life. I hope you will find a similar joy in being present and thankful for the time we have.

I look forward to a new year, 2024, with each of you. I look forward to being present and thankful for each moment we will share, regardless of its joy or sadness. I am and will be thankful that we had the gift of presence together.

Blessings,
Pastor Jenei

PS - Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That's why we call it 'The Present' – Eleanor Roosevelt. I might add, that there is always a gift in presence: God's, yours, and mine.



LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

Pastor Jenei is planning to have a Lenten Bible Study in the Parish House at 6 pm on Wednesday nights during Lent. February 21, 28, and March 6, 13, 20, and 27. We'll meet in the Sanctuary on March 6th. The title of the study will be announced after our deacons' meeting on January 28th. I am sure it will be an intriguing study!



OUTREACH NEWS

The Outreach Committee held its 1st quarter meeting of the new year on January 9th. We began by assessing the number of organizations we supported and the total amount of donations we gave out in 2023. The total came to \$19,336.23. A portion of that, \$1,269.00, included the EnerJazz Concert donations, quilt items donations, and our Christmas Eve Offering. Thank you to all who have given throughout the year. We are looking forward once again to responding to the needs of those who serve others, and those that just need a helping hand. We hope we have the opportunity to serve directly as well.

WHAT A TREAT!

Many thanks to Anna Dundas for providing us with such beautiful music during Jen Cohen's absence last month.



All of the pieces were lovely, and for this writer at least, the Puerto Rican carol, "de Tierra Lejana Venimos" (or "From a Distant Home") was a real favorite. We also welcome Jen back from her study trip in the Caribbean. We can't wait to hear what new steelpan music may be in store for our worship services in the future!



ANNUAL MEETING

All Members and Friends of Union Church of Proctor, Vermont, be Warned that on Sunday, February 4, 2024, the Annual Business Meeting of Union Church of Proctor will be held in the Sanctuary at 5 Church Street, Proctor.

Morning Worship Service for All Ages begins at 10:00 a.m., followed by our regular Coffee "Hour." The Annual Meeting will follow the Coffee Hour, at approximately 11:30 a.m. There will be no Luncheon.

The Purpose of the Meeting will be:

- to hear and accept the Reports of the Committees, Boards and Officers of the Church
- to hear and vote on the Church's Operating Budget for 2024
- to consider any other business that may properly come before the meeting

All Members and Friends are urged to attend the Morning Worship, the Coffee Hour and to participate in the discussions of the Annual Meeting. Non-members will have equal opportunity to speak at the Meeting, and are encouraged to do so, but only Church Members may vote.

REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM



Dear Friends,

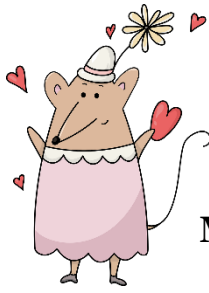
I want to take an opportunity to say a little more about our "Remembrance of Baptism" during our worship service on January 7th because I realized this was a new experience for many of you. Many

people here at Union Church were baptized as infants. I had several people who said to me, "I don't remember my baptism. I was a baby." At least there were a few variations of those statements shared with me since that service. Baptism is a sacred rite, a sacrament universal across Christian denominations. The difference for some Protestant denominations is that baptism is only offered as a rite to those who want to profess a desire to be part of the Christian faith as a confessing believer.

Our worship service to remember our baptism wasn't a literal remembrance of water being placed on our heads or being fully immersed and hearing and/or speaking the sacred professions of faith. For some, though, their baptism was a memorable moment when we spoke our vows to live into and grow with the Christian faith as a foundation for our spiritual lives. This special part of our worship service was first about remembering Jesus' baptism and having that special day, Epiphany, be a source for our epiphany in the new year.

As each person gathered virtually and in person in the sanctuary and shared in a liturgy of remembrance of baptism, we renewed our vows as Christians: to resist oppression, show love and justice, and witness to the work and word of Jesus as best as we are able. Saying these words and coming to the baptismal font in the church and/or touching the sacred waters at home, hopefully, led each of us to a personal and collective epiphany. I prayerfully hoped that each one at home and the church experienced a great renewed discovery (an epiphany) of the preciousness of God's love for us and all of creation to help us create and live in a world that God would recognize as heaven. As I said this past Sunday, a place where nothing's broken and no one's missing. That amazing place of peace, hope, and love, can be a reality through our actions and attitudes of living into our baptism. I hope that everyone will take an opportunity to prayerfully and joyfully remember that sacred moment when you made the new or renewed vow of a life in Christ.

Peace and blessings,
Pastor Jenei



NOTES FROM THE CHURCH MOUSE

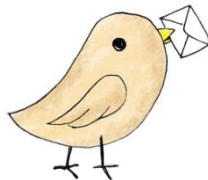
Winter is back again and again. I was hoping the snow would melt before the next storm arrived, but it appears not to be the case.

On February 4th the Annual Church Meeting will be held in the Sanctuary after the service and coffee hour. We hope everyone plans to attend in person or by Zoom. There won't be a Church Council Meeting in February due to the Annual Meeting.

The next Dismas meal prep and dinner will be held on Feb. 7th.

God bless you all and stay healthy.

WE'VE GOT MAIL!



Dear Friends,

What a special dinner we had last month with you – the delicious bread bowls and the lovely Reindeer bag of treats! Thank you so much for the love and warmth you give all year with your company and delicious meals.

Happy New Year!

♥ Geraldine



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year. Please continue to do your good work.

Lin & Jerry O'Connor



*Dear UCP members,
On Saturday, January 20, about 17 members of Maple Leaf Quilters gathered in your parish house for our Community Service Sewing Day. We put together 3 quilt tops that will be finished and then donated to local organizations to be used as a raffle quilt to raise money. Two of these quilts will go to Bridges2Rutland and the Brandon Library*

We thank you for allowing us to use the wonderful, bright space in the parish house.


*Sincerely,
Marsha Cassel and Maple Leaf Quilters*

DISMAS HOUSE DINNER

On Wednesday, January 3rd, an Outreach team served a meal for eight residents, one staff member and two church members. There was a lively conversation and a meal of Shepherd's Pie, freshly made tossed salad and rolls, and homemade lemon and chocolate chip cookies for dessert! Thank you to all the cooks and helpers who made it a very enjoyable evening!



February

- 4 Choir Rehearsal, 8:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Morning Worship, 10:00 a.m.,
Sanctuary & Zoom
Coffee & Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
ANNUAL MEETING. following Coffee Hour, Sanctuary
Church Council meeting, following Annual Meeting
- 7 Dinner Prep. And Meal Sharing
at the Rutland Dismas House, 5:15 p.m.
- 11 Choir Rehearsal, 8:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Morning Worship, 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary & Zoom
Coffee & Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
- 14  Ash Wednesday – Lent begins
Don't forget your Valentine today ♥
- 18 Choir Rehearsal, 8:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Morning Worship, 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary & Zoom
Coffee & Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
- 20 Articles & info due for March Scroll
- 21 Lenten Bible Study, 6:00 p.m., Parish House
- 25 Choir Rehearsal, 8:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Morning Worship, 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary & Zoom
Coffee & Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
- 28 Lenten Bible Study, 6:00 p.m., Parish House



February Liturgists



- 4 Glenn Giles
- 11 Janet Yager
- 18 Kimberley Metcalfe
- 25 Jean Noren

MEN'S COFFEE



Members & friends of Union Church- Join us for Men's Coffee every Saturday from 7-8 a.m. in the Parish House.



February Greeters

- 4 Kay Bergquist
- 11 Meryl Lisananti
- 18 Kim Metcalfe
- 25 Sue Osgood & Carol Trudelle

Union Church of Proctor
5 Church St.
Proctor, VT 05765

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*February
Birthdays*

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 5 Chris Chapin | 22 Gary Chapin |
| 7 Lynn Pilcher | Amanda Parker |
| 9 Ken Thompson | 24 Kendra Moody |
| 12 Sarah Hall | 26 Kim Metcalfe |
| 14 Jake Lacy | 27 Joan Argentero |
| 20 Roger Partridge | Glenna Cowans |
| 21 Ed Cawley | |
| John Cowans | |