

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!



May 2024

2 Corinthians 12:9 New International Version

⁹ But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.

Dear Friends,

April seems to have been a very long month! I haven’t caught up on anything since the start of Lent, or perhaps even the first of the year. And, I have made several mistakes in the bulletin recently, all of which I will attribute to being so busy and perhaps even overwhelmed. All of this to say is not a complaint, heck I would go crazy if I wasn’t busy. And yet, enough is enough.

I don’t particularly appreciate making mistakes. I know we all do it. It’s a part of being human. And, I really dislike my very public mistakes. I know, we all dislike those too. And, it’s when I make these gaffs, that I remember this statement from 2 Corinthians. Now, I know that this passage is not talking about common bumbling, but about sinning and the need to repent for any poor

behaviors. Yet, even with a wrong date on a bulletin or a misplaced Communion Sunday mention, there is a need to acknowledge (perhaps read- take responsibility for) our shortcomings.

In acknowledging where we went wrong, we rely on our “inner strength,” and that “inner strength” is not something that we have just on our own. I don’t believe it’s something built into our character, or just fortified by having a nurturing environment. I think this sort of fortitude comes from the strength of God bolstering us and reminding us that we too are made of the spark of God. I know that God breathed into our ancestors and also into us, and fills us with the possibility to stand as light and love even when we do things wrong and when the world seems impossibly difficult. It’s that spark of God, that God within us, that becomes that voice in our head that says do the right thing- admit your mistake, take responsibility for your actions.

God strengthens us in all sorts of ways that we could never imagine. And as Paul says in the First Corinthians passage above, we ought not to hide

or avoid our “shortcomings” but rather embrace them as part of being human, thus allowing God to hold us firmly (strengthen us) as we may never imagine was possible.

My wife recently lost her mother. It was a long battle, over a year in hospice and she was remarkably able throughout this past year to do things like bingo, church, music, and puzzles, be with friends, talk on the phone, and go to her meals. She said that she was going to keep doing things as much as possible because she knew she had God’s strength within her to keep her keeping on.

My wife’s mother is the bravest example of owning our mistakes that I could ever imagine. Many years ago, when my wife and I were first putting our lives together with our children, my mother-in-law came to me and asked to have a conversation. Honestly, I wasn’t that thrilled to talk with her. She had never been very receptive to me other than obligatory politeness. She had not been very supportive of her daughter as a gay woman, much less a gay clergywoman. She did not offer any rebuttal to cruel and mean-spirited remarks made to us at obligatory family gatherings. Her lack of addressing such behavior even seemed to encourage it. She certainly did not acknowledge our children as her grandchildren.

And here she was in my face asking to talk with me as she was passing through Cleveland on her way to a music retreat. Okay, I said. What would you like to talk about with me? I braced for the conversation. What I got was a heartfelt and tear-filled apology. This older woman apologized for her behavior. She did not explain other than to say, “I know I am wrong.” She said she was wrong to not support her daughter as she tried to tell her about her life. She said she was wrong to not see me as her daughter’s spouse or our children as her grands, much less as her daughter’s own children. She said she was sorry for the pain of her silence of other’s intolerance. She said I take responsibility for the pain I have caused all of you.

That was going nearly two decades ago. And she lived into being the person of love and acceptance

that she said she wanted to be in our lives. She openly attended meetings at her church. She spoke up for LGBTIQQA peoples. She reminded other family of her family - including all of us as hers. She never forgot a birthday for any of us. She kept up with us all and genuinely became a grandparent, a parent, and a beloved mother-in-law.

Mary Ross tapped into that spark of the divine and leaned into her mistakes and openly said I was wrong and, in doing it, made everyone’s life better, including her own.

I am proud of my mother-in-law. I will miss her. I will miss her honesty and her fortitude to make sure all of us were seen as part of her family. I will miss her. I am proud to have known her and learned from her. She did try to be the consummate teacher throughout her life. Lesson learned, Mary. You taught by example and reminded us that we can all be light and love. We just need to lean on that God-spark within as support for whatever we need to do. Thank you for listening to God speaking in your life and leaning into your weakness, giving God the glory to make us new!

Blessings and peace,
Pastor Jenei

“HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE...”

The Church Mouse is on hiatus this month, but we did hear that Pastor Jenei had an especially fun time with her family (and these cute, little companions) at a Solar Eclipse event last month. The town of Brandon celebrated the eclipse with several community events including...a “Zombie Walk!” Word has it that one of the organizers even came as a zombie bride. Just like a total eclipse (or a zombie reverend!), you don’t see that every day!



MY LORD, WHAT A MORNIN'

Not just the name of a well-known spiritual, but a fitting description of our April 14 worship service. Vermont State University at Castleton music major, Olivia Whiting, once again graced us with her beautiful voice singing “My Lord, What a Mornin’” as the Prelude. She also joined our wonderful choir and our Music Director, Jen Cohen, for the Anthem, “The Lord’s Prayer;” and concluded the service with Franz Schubert’s, “An die Musik.”

Schubert composed the piece in 1817 at the ripe old age of 20. According to the British Library, the lyrics (written by a friend of Schubert’s) are “about the power of music to ‘kindle the heart to warm love’ and carry us into a better world.”

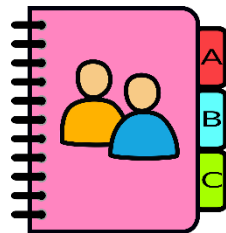
Thank you, Olivia, for kindling our hearts and carrying us into a better world with your music.



Olivia Whiting and Jennifer Cohen

LAST CALL!

Work is proceeding on the new church directory. If any of your contact information has changed, please send it to Kris’s church email at: unionchurchofproctor007@gmail.com by May 5th.



PLANTING A SEA OF SUNFLOWERS



For the third year in a row, “Vermont Plants Sunflowers for Ukraine,” a Vermont-based community action group is offering free sunflower seed packets at local businesses and libraries (including in Proctor, Brandon, Pittsford and West Rutland), and some churches around the state:

<https://www.vtsunflowers4ukraine.org/vpsu-supporters>.

According to VPSU’s website, “Our mission is to inspire countless acts of solidarity with the people of Ukraine by sharing thousands of free seed packets and inspiring the planting of hundreds of thousands of sunflowers in every corner of Vermont. Come late summer and fall, our message of multi-colored sunflowers splashed against our blue Vermont sky will give us all hope and inspiration for positive action.”

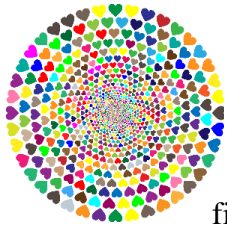
VSPU is sending us 50 packets so we can make them available to the congregation. Look for them at the back of the Sanctuary in the coming weeks. Many thanks to Tom for alerting us to this opportunity.

“NOOKS & CRANNIES” SPRING CLEANUP



You know those corners, cupboards and closets at home that we know need a little attention? The ones where we say, “I’ll just put this here for now and sort it out later,” or “I really should look through that stuff and find a home for it?” Well, our church buildings have those spots, too!

Let’s gather in our work clothes on **Saturday, May 18th at 9:00 AM** for a couple of hours of spiffing up our church spaces together. We may even do a bit of outside cleanup as well. Many hands really *do* make light work. See you there!



OUTREACH NEWS

Greetings from the Outreach Committee. It is time to report on your recent donations. The first, which seems a while ago but time moves quickly, was for our Lenten collection. The total amount collected was \$2,386. It was designated and given to The Children's Center which does such a great job caring for our community's young children. We are fortunate to have them utilize the space we can affordably offer.

Also, in April, on your behalf, we donated \$500, to Rutland Area Robotics. They are a group of young people who create and manage robots to accomplish extraordinary feats! The money was used to help finance a trip to Houston, Texas to compete in the "Worlds" competition. They have already received awards for their work and they wanted to test themselves against world class competitors!

Finally, a reminder that, in addition to your quarterly donation to the Pittsford Food Shelf, **food items are also collected in the church connector** on Sundays and delivered to the food shelf on Mondays. One item, three items, or any amount is appreciated. They also accept self-care items and cleaning products. Thank you for all you do to lift up others and spread love. Outreach Committee

MEMORIAL DAY



Memorial Day is always a nice day in Proctor. A day of community, fun and, most of all, remembrance. The Parade at 10 a.m. will feature firetrucks, music, a student from Proctor Elementary reciting the Gettysburg address, bagpipes, and decorated bikes! So decorate your bike, be at Lafond's at 9:45 a.m. and join the parade!



The Skating Rink will be open after the parade at noon. Everyone is welcome.

THANK YOU

*Dear Union Church Outreach Committee,
The Children's Center is so thankful to your committee for your Lenten donation. With your generous donation, we were able to help three families. Two of our families pay over \$2000.00 a month in child care. We were able to provide them with some needed support. The third family is a single mother struggling to pay her balance. This money was truly a gift for her. The Children's Center cannot thank you enough for your continued support of our program.
Sincerely, Joanne Stockton
Director, Children's Center at the Union Church*

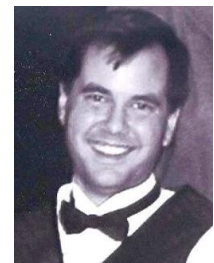


MAPLE LEAF QUILTERS WORKSHOP IN PARISH HOUSE



On April 18, Debbie Wendt, from the Boston area, lead a class in Egyptian Tentmaker Quilting in the Parish House. This is a technique of appliqué used in Cairo during the time of Jesus. She lived in Cairo and purchased several samples of this technique which she had in class for us to see. Class members each completed a small project using the same technique. This photo is a complete quilt using that technique. It is a spectacular quilt!

CELEBRATING BEN



The community is invited to gather at the Proctor Skating Rink on Sunday, May 26th, at 4:00 p.m. to celebrate the life of Ben Curtis. There will be hotdogs & ice cream, etc. If you'd like to bring a dish to share, it's always appreciated.

May



- 1 Dinner Prep. And Meal Sharing at the Rutland Dismas House, 5:15 p.m.
- 5 Choir Rehearsal, 8:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Morning Worship, Pastor Russell Edwards preaching, 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary & Zoom
Coffee & Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
- 12 Choir Rehearsal, 8:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Morning Worship – Mother’s Day, 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary & Zoom
Coffee & Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
- 18 Spring Clean Up, 9:00 a.m., Church & Grounds
- 19 Choir Rehearsal, 8:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Morning Worship, 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary & Zoom
Coffee & Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
Church Council meeting, following Fellowship time
- 20 Articles & info due for June Scroll
- 26 Choir Rehearsal, 8:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Morning Worship, 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary & Zoom
Coffee & Fellowship, 11:00 a.m.
Memorial Celebration for Ben Curtis, 4:00 p.m., Proctor Skating Rink
- 27 Memorial Day Parade & Celebration, Proctor 10am, & Skating Rink 12 noon



May Greeters

- 5 Sue Osgood & Carol Trudelle
- 12 Meryl Lisananti
- 19 Kim Baccei
- 26 Muriel Sedergren

USHERS FOR MAY

- 5 Paul Pilcher
- 12 Kim Baccei
- 19 Paul Pilcher
- 26 Kim Baccei



BEAVER POND

Beaver Pond is open for the season and the grills will probably be out by the time you read this. Dawn to

dusk. See you there!

May Liturgists

- 5 Jeannie Cushman
- 12 Jean Noren
- 19 Janet Yager
- 26 Kim Metcalfe



Union Church of Proctor
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Proctor, VT 05765

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May
Birthdays

5	Emily St. Peter	21	Cathy Canty
8	Chris Keyser		Anne Proctor
10	Ariana Malutich		Dan Varney
14	Renzo Palmerini	23	Robert Webster
18	Bob Argentero	27	Pam Ojala
20	Dillon Metcalfe	28	Lon Schneider