

EPISTLE

August, 2018



Bradford Congregational Church – UCC
An Open & Affirming Congregation!
Bradford, VT (802) 222-4034

our website: <http://bradforducc.org>
email us at: bradfordvtucc@gmail.com
see us on Facebook: **Bradford Congregational Church**

Message from Pastor Jeff:

We all remember “mountaintop” experiences. You know – the extraordinary feeling of being loved by the one you love, the birth of a child, the day your adopted child arrived, a spiritual experience that shaped your life. These and other events stand out from the ordinary. They stay with us in our memory but temporally they pass. Their impact may never be forgotten but the event itself becomes woven into the fabric of our lives and we come down from the mountaintop to do our living in the valley.

When you think about it, the valley is where we are sustained. You can’t farm a mountaintop. You cannot commune with neighbors. Your food would need to be packed in and you have to leave the summit in order to make a living. I was reading about Mt. Everest while writing this message. On average people spend 40 days after they reach Base Camp before ascending the mountain and if they are lucky enough to reach the summit, they have only 15 minutes before they have to begin their decent. Mountaintops may move our spirits but they cannot sustain our lives. That is done somewhere else.

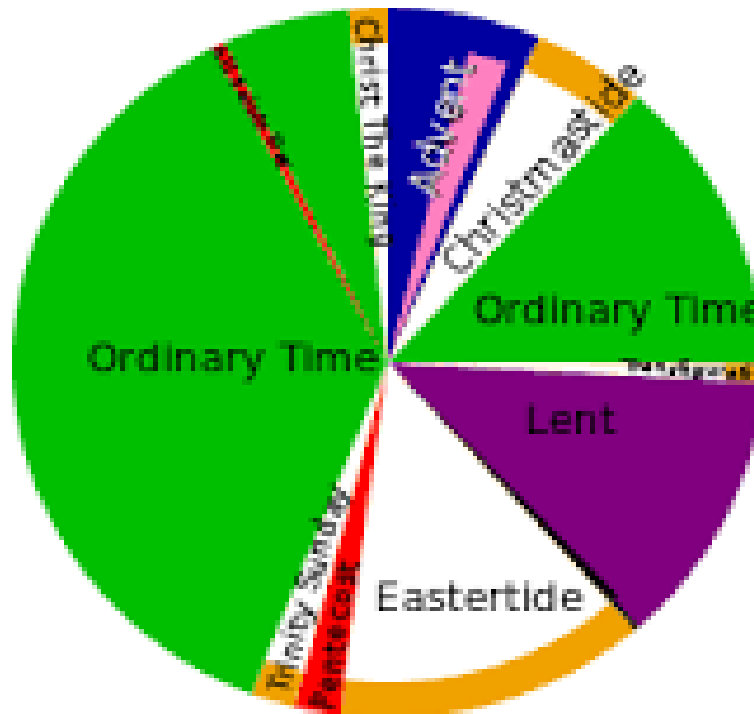
I am reminded of this because of the Christian Year. It is filled with mountaintop experiences – the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, the birth of Christ, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter. There are defining moments for our faith and their importance cannot be questioned. But there also times in the church when spiritually we have to come down from the mountaintop and live out the sweeping vision we gained while on the summit.

The Church calls this season “ordinary time.” In Latin it is called **tempus per annum** translated as *time during the year*. Sounds rather nondescript, and I suppose it is. Compared to the mountains mentioned in the Bible – Mount Horeb, Mount Nebo, Mount Sinai – “ordinary time” does not point to a unique event. As grand or as ominous as the view from these peaks may have been, Israel, like us, lived out its life in the valleys between the peaks.

So this season of the church year, this “ordinary time,” offers us an opportunity. It is a time to take stock of our shared life as Christians. We have been given the time needed to look in-depth at a particular book in the Bible, to ponder the perplexity of modern living, to step back and gain perspective on our lives, our church, our nation, and our world. We are allowed, indeed encouraged, to look at the “ordinary” events of our lives and place them within the providence of God. Let us use this time, then, to remember the spiritual vista of our mountaintop experiences by implementing them in the valley where we do our living.

The first Sunday in August will be the eighteenth Sunday of “ordinary time.” May we strive to make what is “ordinary” into an extraordinary reflection of the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. The world awaits our witness.

Faithfully, **Pastor Jeff**



Exciting News for August 12th



Our sister church West Newbury Congregational has invited our entire congregation to their worship on **August 12th** ... when Bruce and Caleb Freeberg will be playing! They're the Father/Son toe-tapping Gospel duo of Bruce and Caleb Freeberg.

This Family Worship service will be one that gets you a-humming for the rest of the day, we guarantee it! The service is at 10:45 a.m. and a potluck fellowship time will follow.

What Can You Bring? The folks at West Newbury Congregational have asked us to bring finger foods: cheese and crackers, fruits, cut sandwiches.

Because Caleb is returning to Florida this month, it's very possible that this may be the last opportunity to experience this talented twosome.

If you need a ride to the service, please let a Deacon know.

Here are some notes from John Atwood about special music for August.

August 5

We welcome the return of Betsy Alexander to perform with Bridget Peters and Marcia Tomlinson. Betsy arranged the Southern Harmony “Return Again” which itself is a rendering of the older New England shape note “Celestial Watering.”

August 19

The [Seven Stars Recorder Ensemble](#) focuses on early music from the 13th to 18th centuries, and will provide most of the music aside from hymn accompaniment. The Ensemble will begin playing during the gathering at 9:50 and provide music for the prelude, special music, offertory and postlude. Selections will include music by the Johann Christoph Pezel (1639--1694), William Byrd (ca. 1540--1623), and Sebastian Festa (ca. 1490--1524). On this Sunday you will want to sit down front near the recorders!

August 26

We welcome the return of trumpeter Joshua Pauly who will play five selections from Telemann's collection of twelve heroic marches.

Looking ahead to 2 September, for postlude your organist will play an "organ battle" from Spain or Portugal. Spain and Portugal musically followed their own direction incorporating cultural aspects of Moorish ancestry including the unique sound of horizontal reed pipes in the organ case. [Organ battles](#) represented the fight between good and evil. This will be fun!



ANNUAL ALL-CHURCH YARD SALE

It's time again for our all-church yard sale and as in the past it will be held in the Church vestry on the following days:
Friday, August 24 – 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
Saturday, August 25 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

We are soliciting items to be delivered to the church vestry (no clothing or bedding please). Items may be brought to the church any time on or after August 19th. The vestry door will be open from 9:00 to 5:00 each day. If you have items you would like to drop off before this date, you will see a door marked “yard sale donations” in the vestry where you can put them.

Items, in good condition, such as but not limited to:

- Furniture;
- Nick-Knacks;
- Pewter;
- Books;
- Silver;
- Tools;
- Collectibles;
- Kitchen Items;
- Arts & Craft;



Thanks in advance for all your donations!!

Community Supper

We're looking forward to seeing you on August 23rd

**Reminder: The Community Suppers are now the
4th THURSDAY of each month**

Hope you can join us!

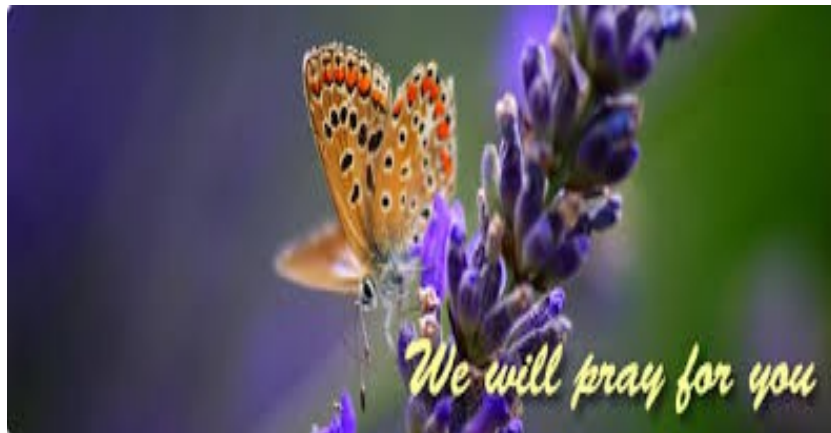


We love to celebrate Community Supper birthdays!

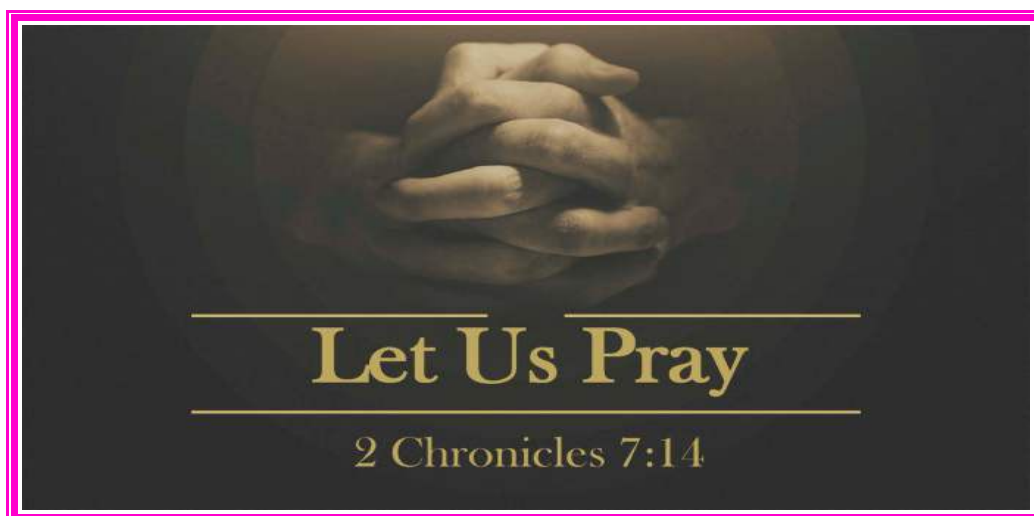
Prayer requests may be emailed to
[our prayer group](#) or [here](#)

It is our privilege to pray for you and those you care about.

We pray for each other,



without ceasing
**and your prayer requests
are held in strict confidence.**



Lectionary Readings AUGUST (Year B)

The theme hymns may be linked to video performances ... click on each if you desire listening to hymns as you read your scriptures or meditate on them



Everywhere is where you can think on the Word

August 5

2 Samuel 11:26 - 12:13a (David repents)

Ephesians 4:1-16 (building up the church)

John 6:24-35 (The bread of life ... open your eyes)

Psalm 51:1-12

theme hymn: *Bread of Heaven*

August 12

2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33 (David and his son Absalom)

Ephesians 4:25 - 5:2 (slander, bitterness, anger = sin)

John 6:35, 41-51 (belief is a gift from God)

Psalm 130

theme hymn: *Amazing Grace*

August 19

1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14 (Solomon's wise choice)

Ephesians 5:15-20 (walk wisely, purposely, joyfully)

John 6:51-58 (abide in Christ)

Psalm 111

theme hymn: *Be Thou My Vision*

August 26

1 Kings 8:22-30, 41-43 (God's love is steadfast)

Ephesians 6:10-20 (put on the armor of God)

John 6:55-69 (The Spirit gives life)

Psalm 84

theme hymn: *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*

September 2

Song of Solomon 2:8-13 (a new life beckons)

James 1:17-27 (peer into the Word; act on it!)

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23 (defining true uncleanness)

Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9

theme hymn: *Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine*

September 9

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9 (open your eyes to service, not riches)

James 2:1-10, 14-18 (resist favoring the rich and powerful)

Mark 7:24-37 (Jesus responds to our faith)

Psalm 125

theme hymn: *O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

September 16

Proverbs 1:20-33 (beware scoffing at God's word)

James 3:1-12 (our speech needs to bless, not curse)

Mark 8:27-38 (deny yourself and take up your cross)

Psalm 19

theme hymn: *Hope of the World*

Vermont Conference



Message from Rev. Pam Lucas

Exciting News!!!



Meet our candidate for Associate Conference Minister, **Rev. Paul Sangree**

A little biographical information:

Rev. Paul Sangree is the Senior Pastor of the Congregational Church of Westborough, Ma UCC. He also serves as the Chairperson of the Church Development Council of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ. He is a graduate of Brown University and Andover-

Newton Theological School, where he was an adjunct professor of theology from 1999-2007. He is married to Irene Bagdoian and they have one daughter, Anna.

A Special meeting of the Conference will take place at the Congregational Church, UCC of Middlebury at 11:00AM on August 11, 2018 for the purpose of voting on the election of Rev. Paul Sangree as our Associate Conference Minister.

A reception will follow.

As is true with any meeting of the Conference, each church should send a pastor(s) and delegates.

For further information or questions, please call the Conference Office (728-4999)

(note from Pam Lucas) In the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ there is an abundance of creativity going on in our local churches. Artists and writers, musicians and dancers, poets and designers of sacred space work together to bring prayer and scripture, faith and action, word and silence into an experience of God's holy presence - as we also bring a very real world into that space and we hold that world before God and seek our way forward into the coming week.

Among those who contribute to that creativity is Rev. Tom Kinder, pastor of the United Church of Strafford. One of Tom's gifts to his congregations has been the writing of new words to old tunes to be sung in in worship. This week one of Tom's friends shared with us a new hymn that was sung in Strafford on July 8th. It is a hymn for our days.

Tom is willing to share this hymn with you - asking only that if you use it you give proper attribution and let him know what you've done with it - kindwell333@gmail.com

SOMEONE NEEDS TO SHOW THE WAY

Tune: ABERYSTWYTH 7.7.7.D.

Words: Thomas Cary Kinder, 2018

Ezekiel 33:1-11

**Someone needs to show the way
When the nation goes astray,
Someone needs to hold ideals
Making urgent, strong appeals.
If not we, this church, then who?
Christ, the truth, asks we be true,
Placing no concern above
Making real God's realm of love.**

**When we see the world go wrong,
When the poor do not belong,
When the politics of fear
Harden hearts to cries we hear,
When earth torn by war or greed
Turns from peace and health all need,
Then we churches have a choice,
Silence or courageous voice.**

**Christ and his disciples show
Where the faithful church will go,
Out to shine love, life and light,
Daring dream of earth made right,
Healing, driving demons out,
Standing up to hate or doubt,
Risking all before too late.
Rise now, church. Earth cannot wait.**



Upper Valley Habitat for Humanity®

We commenced construction of a new single-family home in Sharon, Vermont, and held a Groundbreaking Ceremony earlier this month to celebrate the progress. Continue reading to learn about how you can get involved!

New Home Build in Sharon

Over the last several months, our Building Committee and staff have been hard at work preparing for a new home in Sharon, Vermont, for a wonderful family of five.

We closed on the land in May and site work began in early June. The site has been leveled, the well is drilled, driveway is formed, and the footings and foundation have been poured.

Volunteer participation will begin in early August with framing. As part of their commitment, the Cayer family will be contributing 500 hours of sweat equity to the project.

For photos and updates, [follow us on Facebook](#).



Groundbreaking Ceremony

On the morning of Tuesday, July 10th, more than 30 supporters, elected officials, community leaders, and volunteers came together to break ground on the Cayer's home in Sharon, Vermont.

After opening remarks from Habitat officials and State Senator Alison Clarkson, the Cayers officially broke ground on their new home project- with gold shovels, of course!

To learn more about the Cayers, who were pushed out of their rental due to unaffordability, please visit [our website](#).



L to R: Colby Clarkson; Andrew Grimson; Mindy & Zack Cayer with Henree & Lane; Gerry Botha (holding Wren); Representative Jim Masland; & Senator Alison Clarkson.

Seeking Lunch Volunteers

We want to make sure our hungry hammer-swingers in Sharon are well fed!

We're seeking food volunteers who can provide simple lunches for up to 10 build volunteers on Fridays and Saturdays, starting in August.

Meal providers will operate on a rotating schedule and we can arrange meal pick-ups if more convenient.

Please [email us](#) if interested!

Not able to volunteer? [Consider a donation](#).

This Epistle is a monthly publication of the Bradford Congregational Church. It is uploaded the last day of each month. Anyone wishing to receive the email notification to it may request it by emailing the church email below.

Some helpful links:

- our website is <http://bradfordducc.org/>
- our church's email is bradfordvtucc@gmail.com
- Click on [EPISTLE](#) to read back issue of this newsletter
- our Sunday School, Music and Missions are at [Programs](#)
- Past Sermons can be accessed at [News & Sermons](#).
- our congregation's activities are listed on our [online calendar](#)
- our Facebook page link is [Bradford Congregational Church](#)

