

# EPISTLE

A Monthly Publication of the Bradford Congregational Church

P.O. Box 387, 145 North Main Street, Bradford, VT 05033

## Pastor's Word

There is a lot to share with you

### COVID and its impact

No one would argue that COVID has a lingering effect on various elements of our society. Its impact on children and their education has been profound. The church, too, has been impacted. The challenges facing many congregations led to some very creative approaches to worship. Our own church held virtual worship with the pastor using YouTube as a platform for people to gather for worship. As creative as this approach might have been, we all rejoiced when we could be together for worship and fellowship.

When we did return to worship, we were unable to offer Christian Education experiences for our children and youth. That is still the case. Staffing of these programs is still problematic and this has resulted in an overall drop in our attendance...

in this issue of the *Epistle*.

- There is great and unexpected news.
- A celebration of ministry.
- An exciting opportunity to reimagine our church's mission.

So, let's get at it.

First, the great and unexpected news.

Our church has been the beneficiary of a generous gift. It comes to us by way of

a trust established by Marcia Pierce who died on March 3, 2020.

Many in our church remember her and speak of her fondly citing her deep devotion to our church and its ministry. I encourage you to read in full the letter written by the Trustees outlining the nature and conditions established by the trust.

*Our Church has been blessed with the extraordinary generosity of one of our life-long members, Marcia M Pierce. The Bradford Congregational Church is designated to receive, as one of the beneficiaries of the Marcia M Pierce Revocable Trust, the remainder of her trust estate. The Church is required by the rules and restrictions of the Trust to use only the income generated by this bequest. Furthermore, this income can only be used to maintain our Church building and no more than ten percent of current expenses in a given year. No money from the actual bequest can ever be spent. At this time, we do not know the exact amount of this bequest.*



There is no easy fix to this problem, but we do ask you to keep this need in your prayers as we strive to be of service to all our members.

## Looking Ahead....

### **The church bizarre will be held on Saturday, October 15th.**

Here are the lectionary readings for October:

**Oct 2** Lamentations 1:1-6;  
Lamentations 3:19-26 ; or Psalm  
137; Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 ;  
Psalm 37:1-9; 2 Timothy 1:1-14;  
Luke 17:5-10

**Oct 9** Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7; Psalm  
66:1-12; 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c;  
Psalm 111; 2 Timothy 2:8-15;  
Luke 17:11-19

**Oct 16** Jeremiah 31:27-34; Psalm  
119:97-104 Genesis 32:22-31;  
Psalm 121; 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5;  
Luke 18:1-8

**Oct 23** Joel 2:23-32; Psalm 65;  
Sirach 35:12-17 or Jeremiah  
14:7-10, 19-22; Psalm 84:1-7; 2  
Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18; Luke  
18:9-14

**Oct 30** Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4;  
Psalm 119:137-144; Isaiah  
1:10-18; Psalm 32:1-7; 2  
Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12; Luke  
19:1-10

*However, we do know that it will be in the range of 1.6 million to 2 million dollars.*

*We are and will be forever grateful for Marcia's remembrance of our Church.*

*Sincerely,*

*The Bradford Congregational UCC Board of Trustees*

We celebrate the gift of her life and her devotion to the work of Christ.

The second piece of news is from the Diaconate. They have set aside **Sunday, October 9th** as a *Celebration of Ministry*. We will be offering a Christian Education experience for our young people, a hoped for video presentation highlighting the ministry and people of our church, all culminating with ice cream sundaes. I hope you will be able to be with us for this special Sunday.

One last major item of excitement. The Diaconate met via ZOOM with Nancy Brown. You may remember her as our facilitator when we were developing caring communication patterns. She was asked to help lead the Diaconate through an envisioning process that would explore our vision for ministry. At some point in our meeting, she spoke about our mission statement serving as our marching orders for ministry. The problem was no one, myself included, could tell her what our mission statement was. So, that's job one. Why? Because every program, every endeavor should be in league with our mission. The Diaconate hopes to have an outside facilitator help our congregation develop a mission statement that is unique to our church. This should be a lot of fun as we look at how we can do God's work in this time and place. Be watching for more information.

Please keep our ministry in your prayers.

Faithfully,  
Pastor Jeff