

# EPISTLE

September, 2017



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

Our website: <http://bradforducc.org>  
email us at: [bradfordvtucc@gmail.com](mailto:bradfordvtucc@gmail.com)  
see us on Facebook: **Bradford Congregational Church**

Dear Church Family,

This Epistle is coming your way on the Labor Day weekend. All of us in the Diaconate wish you a joyous, safe and relaxing holiday.

Behind the scenes, Labor Day is also a very busy one for so many of us ... kids climbing up those steep steps onto the school bus, college bound children waving as they drive themselves away, teachers putting last minute touches on classroom walls, parents taking a deep breath of gratitude as they head off to work, grandparents eagerly sharing out grandkid photos on social media, merchants trading out everything summer for everything autumn, advertisers daring to be the first with Christmas commercials, loggers delivering cord wood, heating oil trucks going non-stop, boat owners planning on that one last launch of the year, homeowners thinking about the screen doors and storm windows, choir directors thumbing through stacks of anthems, and all of us scratching our heads and wondering, “Where did the summer go?!”

Of course, as we give attention to summer drifting its way into Fall, it's appropriate to also remind ourselves of our Labor ... the work that is such a large portion of our lives.

In her blog this week, author Tiffany Manning noted, “God’s desire is to be woven into every part of our lives, including our work. Whether we work inside or outside the church walls, God sees all that we do and appreciates when we work to maintain and provide for God’s creation. By demonstrating God’s love and characteristics through our words and deeds and service of others, we bring glory to God in our work. As you rest from your labor on this Labor Day, thank God for the privilege of honoring God through work.”

And this Labor Day, we pray for those hit by Hurricane Harvey. There will be little if any joy for them. And we feel helpless in the wake of their suffering. Yet, the last Sunday of August there was an alternate Lectionary reading, Psalm 124. Its optimistic and strengthening words are a perfect prayer of thanks now for the survivors:

*“If the Lord hadn’t been for us...  
the waters would have drowned us;  
the torrent would have come over our necks;  
then the raging waters would have come over our necks!  
Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
the maker of heaven and earth.”*

(see page 3 for the United Church of Christ flyer on how to help). Also, check our website for up-to-date information on the relief efforts.

Reminder: we are making sure your pulpit is filled each Sunday with supply ministers who preach the Word to all ages, spread the Joy, and advance the Love. To see who and when, check out our website [Church News](#) page. And to read the sermons you missed check out the [Past Sermons](#) page.

In Christ and Beloved Community,  
Your Board of Deacons (Diaconate)

Upcoming Pulpit Supply ministers:

Sept. 3 – Rev. Michael Caldwell (communion ... gluten free option also served)

Sept. 10 – Rev. Jeffrey Long-Middleton

Sept. 17 – Rev. David Pruitt

(you can check the link above for pulpit supply after the 17th)

**Below is the insert provided by the United Church of Christ for the September 3<sup>rd</sup> worship bulletins. It indicates the link for information on monetary donations to the UCC Hurricane Harvey fund as well as a link for the disaster kits which can be made.**



## **An Epic Storm needs an Epic Response**

The UCC Disaster Ministries is already engaged in response by supporting partners and planning for recovery. Giving to the Harvey appeal ensures that **100%** of your support will be used for disaster relief and rehabilitation targeting the unique needs of vulnerable individuals and families.

We do this by being nimble and adaptable in each disaster which allows us to fill gaps in services through provisions of spiritual care, community organizing, repair and reconstruction of homes, tools, building materials and volunteer coordination.

Please pray for continued strength and resolve for those whose lives have been impacted by Hurricane/Tropical Storm Harvey.

Please also pray for the First Responders, disaster coordinators, and many volunteers who are working tirelessly to provide relief after Harvey, now and in the days, months, and years to come.

**Donate Money.** The response and rebuilding will be long-term. Your generous contribution now makes this long-term response possible. Click on [www.ucc.org/disaster\\_hurricane\\_harvey](http://www.ucc.org/disaster_hurricane_harvey) to make your contribution.

**Assemble CWS Clean-up Kits.** The UCC has matching grants available, even if you previously assembled kits in 2017: click on [www.ucc.org/disaster\\_2017\\_matching\\_grants\\_for\\_cws\\_kits\\_home\\_page](http://www.ucc.org/disaster_2017_matching_grants_for_cws_kits_home_page) to learn about the kits that are needed.



We're wondering if there's any interest in an occasional workbee....perhaps at church, or at someone's home...a chance to finish up an unfinished project, to learn a new skill. or just to visit? We have access to some fabric, and would like to make quilts for a good cause, but don't know of a placeholder to take them. All ideas welcome. We look forward to hearing from you.

Peggy Blanchard... call 222-4088 or email [802peg@gmail.com](mailto:802peg@gmail.com)  
Lucia Button... call 222-4586 or email [jklbutton@gmail.com](mailto:jklbutton@gmail.com)

## From the Board of Missions and Social Action

The Board of Missions and Social Action has had a busy summer!

With the return of Lora Chatfield, from Memphis, we began organizing a fund raising dinner for Help Kids India. Their organization is located in East Corinth, Vermont with a focus on supporting five creches in India. “Crèche” is a term used in India for a simple day nursery or preschool for young children.

The crèches we fund go way beyond simple: the needs of the children we serve are too great and too immediate. Our crèches are an intervention program free to poverty stricken children. Safety, nutrition, hygiene and health care must be in place before learning is possible. While all this is occurring, they're getting a developmentally appropriate education in a nurturing, caring, structured environment. The crèche concept in India springs from the work of Maria Montessori, whose ideas on education, especially as a way of educating India's poor, had caught on in India decades before she came there in 1939 to work.

Today the Montessori model is followed in our crèches. The head teachers are experienced educators with specialized training in the method, with its emphasis on independence, freedom within limits, and respect for a child's psychological, physical, and social development. ( taken from their website: <http://www.helpkidsindia.org/>)

We are grateful to the owners of the Asian Super Store in Lebanon, Rajesh and Sheena Arora who donated not only many food items but their time and labor in preparation of the delicious meal. Along with Sheena was her daughter Taniya and friends Nicelita Hardan, Bani Sharma, and Swarna Manthena.

Food donations came from Hannaford, Taj-E-India Catering and Take-Out, The Jewel of India Restaurant, Pierson's Farm Stand, Sweet Cow Yogurt, and Ben and Jerry's. Members of the Board of HKI and the BMSA set up, cooked, served and cleaned up a most delicious dinner served to 110 guests.

Nearly \$4,000.00 was raised to help maintain the wonderful work of HKI. Thank you to all the folks who pitched in to make this happen.

In the fall please be on the look out for an announcement of the next book we would like to read together and Book Group Brunch. We are also talking about some new fundraising on a very local level so please consider joining us when we work out the details.

## Annual Harvest Bazaar

The 2017 Harvest Bazaar is right around the corner and we need your help! Below are the areas that need donated items for

- Candy table- fudge, brittle, bark, treats. Please label your items if they DO HAVE nuts.
- Food table- breads, cookies, jellies, pickles, and other baked goods. Please label your baked goods if they DO HAVE nuts.
- Craft table- knitted and hand made items of any kind. some examples are socks, scarves, aprons, hats, mittens, quilts, jewelry
- Attic collectibles table- any gently used items that someone may find as a collectible.
- New addition this year, All Holidays Table! - if you have anything holiday related that we could sell, for example pre-owned ornaments or decorations, hand made holiday items. All holidays welcome: Any season!

Luncheon is from 11-1 and will be chili and cornbread with apple crisp and cider. Please contact Maribeth if you could work in the kitchen.

Date 10/14/17  
Time 9am-2pm  
Luncheon Time 11-1

Please bring items in beginning Thursday 10/12 and Friday 10/13. Please bring food items on Friday. Church will be unlocked.

Thank you!



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

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

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**We pray for each other,  
*without ceasing*  
and  
your prayer requests are held in strict confidence.**

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***Would you like the person(s) for whom we are praying to receive a note saying we are lifting up those prayers? Please let us know their address and we will mail it.***

***We keep any names, concerns, and personal information in strict confidence.***



## **QUICK NOTE from the SEARCH COMMITTEE**

We are in the ministerial profile-reading stage right now. As candidates submit their profiles, we enter into a prayerful consideration of them. This involves reading them individually and then coming together as a committee to read them again. Then we enter into a lengthy discussion period because every candidate deserves our full attention. We firmly believe that God has a minister for us and we need to be open to discovering who that is!

We do want you to know that all churches in our conference (and perhaps in all New England) are experiencing a slow influx of interest from ministers. This is not abnormal. Sometimes there may be a trickle of profiles submitted, followed by times when it's all we can do to keep up. Right now it's trickle time.

### **From the United Church of Christ**



(check out your conference's website [here](#))

Dear Beloved Community of the Vermont Conference,

As the pictures of catastrophic flooding in Texas inundate our TVs and Tablets, the sheer volume of destruction is hard to take in. Some commentators have named this a 1000 year storm, but we know as climate change continues to be at work, sadly, that may not be the case.

What can we do to assist our neighbors in Texas and other Gulf Coast cities and towns? First, we need to refrain from sending things that have not been asked for like clothing, stuffed animals and food. While our intentions are good, these things often do not get to the people who need help and in fact can impede those who are working to bring relief and aid to victims. The best way we can help is to make a financial contribution. There are many funds that have been established. Our UCC has launched an emergency appeal, the Emergency USA Fund. Please mark your check for "Hurricane Harvey."



What else can we do? We can support those who have lost homes and loved ones and cherished belongings by surrounding them with our prayers. Further, we can remember that while the need is currently acute, there will be need for assistance for years in recovering from this devastation. We can not abandon the survivors when the news turns all too quickly to other concerns. Down the road, after the focus of helpers turns from rescue to recovery there will be opportunities to help rebuild.

*Psalm 46 reminds us that when catastrophe strikes, we are not abandoned.*

God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;  
though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.  
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;  
God will help it when the morning dawns.  
The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter;  
he utters his voice, the earth melts.  
The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

May our sisters and brothers in harm's way find refuge.

In peace,  
Lynn



## Lectionary Readings September (Year A)



### September 3

Exodus 3:1-15 (the burning bush)

Romans 12:9-21 (Paul lists how we need to conduct ourselves)

Matthew 16:21-28 (a rebuke leads to a discipleship lesson)

Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c (remember, it was God that sent Moses)

theme hymn: *The Church's One Foundation*

### September 10

Exodus 12:1-14 (the Passover festival)

Romans 13:8-14 (live as the people of light)

Matthew 18:15-20 (strive for reconciliation first)

Psalm 149 (The Lord takes pleasure in His people)

theme hymn: *Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether*

### September 17

Exodus 14:19-31 (God parts the sea)

Romans 14:1-12 (Serve God, not a series of rules)

Matthew 18:21-35 (the parable of the unforgiving servant)

Psalm 114 (Tremble, O Earth, at the presence of the Lord)

theme hymn: *When God Delivered Israel*

## September 24

Exodus 16:2-15 (manna from heaven)

Philippians 1:21-30 (be obedient to Christ)

Matthew 20:1-16 (parable of the vineyard laborers)

Psalm 105:1-6,37-45 (God is faithful to Israel)

theme hymn: *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah*

## October 1

Exodus 17: 1-7 (rock of ages cleft for the Israelites!)

Philippians 2:1-13 (he took on human form)

Matthew 21:23-32 (2 sons and vineyard work to be done)

Psalm 78:1-4,12-16 (Incline your ears to God's teaching)

theme hymn: *At the Name of Jesus*

## October 8

Exodus 20:1-4,7-9,12-20 (the Mosaic covenant)

Philippians 3:4b-14 (to be "in Christ")

Matthew 21:33-46 (parable of the wicked tenants)

Psalm 19 (the heavens tell the glory of God)

theme hymn: *Be Thou My Vision*

*The theme hymns listed with the Lectionary reading lists are found in our Pilgrim hymnal and/or the Hymn folders and are listed here only as lyrical illustrations of the week's scripture selections, so readers may carry the theme in tune form throughout their week!*

# GO PAPERLESS

**PLEASE** consider going paperless for this monthly newsletter.

Simply notify Barb Joslyn.



**Happiness is the Community  
Supper!**

**Every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday ... our next  
will be September 27<sup>th</sup> ... see you  
then!**