

# EPISTLE

## November, 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](mailto:bradfordvtucc@gmail.com)

see us on Facebook: Bradford Congregational Church

### **Message from Pastor Jeff:**

I have the privilege of driving each week from Grand Isle to Bradford and back again. It is always beautiful but no more so than this fall. At its peak, the hillsides looked as if they were on fire. All that got me thinking about Moses. I know, that seems like a leap but stay with me.

Remember Moses and the burning bush? God had not yet called Moses to go to Egypt and liberate his people. So God, striving to get Moses' attention, sets a bush on fire but leaves it unconsumed. Intrigued, Moses turns aside and the message is given. Ever wonder why God didn't just tell Moses to go and confront Pharaoh? Why the bush? I suppose there are a number of answers to that question. Maybe God wanted to prove to Moses that he was hearing God's voice. I mean, a human couldn't have pulled this off. Or maybe God wanted to get an insight into the psyche of Moses. Would he walk on by? Would he step aside? Was Moses curious and open to wonder?

Here is where the color of fall foliage comes in. I found it challenging to keep my eyes on the road. Everywhere one looked, the colors burned through. So it was easy to take note, to see the beauty and to give thanks for the grace I had been given to see it. But here's an interesting fact. It comes to us by way of Google.

I simply asked why leaves change color. I kind of knew. They told me this in school but I intend to make us of this fact to make a point. Why do leaves change color?:

*Chlorophyll Breaks Down....in the fall, because of changes in the length of daylight and changes in temperature, the leaves stop their food-making process. The chlorophyll breaks down, the green color disappears, and the yellow to orange colors become visible and give the leaves part of their fall splendor.*

So let me see if I get this right. The colors that took my breath away, the hillsides dotted with flaming yellows and reds, that has always been there, hidden by chlorophyll. Is it fair to say that the lush green of summer is not the true color of the leaves. They are on fire all the time but hidden from the eye.

Moses turned aside to marvel at the mysterious wonder set before him by God. For us, it seems, that wonder is one of the constants of our lives. Even in the green of summer, the fire of radiant color resides within the leaves waiting to be unleashed. We pass through the world and dull ourselves to its presence. Perhaps it is we who are being called to turn aside that we might find God calling.

Faithfully,  
**Pastor Jeff**

**Pastor Jeff's office hours**

Sunday afternoons  
all day Mondays

**978-273-6399** is his recommended number to use at any time  
calls to 802-222-4610 will be answered only when he is in the parsonage



## **Our annual mission of Thanksgiving baskets**

For as long as we can remember (50 years?), we've been part of a community-wide effort to provide full Thanksgiving meals for those who might otherwise not be able to afford it, as well as for those who might feel alone. For many years the Bradford Food Shelf has provided the turkeys.

This ecumenical-based effort was actually started by our church fellowship but responsibility is now shared by all the Inter-Church Council member churches. This year our church is being asked to provide:

- 35 cans of green beans
- 35 cans of corn
- 7 pies (it was 8 last year but another church has joined our group)

Please bring the food to the Grace Methodist church on Thursday Nov 15<sup>th</sup> any time from 9:00-12:00. This delivery time includes frozen pies. If the pies are fresh please bring them on Sunday the 18<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 - 4:00. Sunday is when the Thanksgiving baskets will be picked up by the families needing them.

## **A Message from Organist John Atwood**

On 4 November the choir will sing a very modal and mystical hymn by Hildegard von Bingen (1098--1179): 'Praise to the Trinity.' On November 11 and November 18 we welcome back Wanda Kivela to the organ bench! Your regular organist will use the practice time working on Advent and Christmas music. The organ music on 25 November will emphasize chorale preludes based on 'From Heaven Above to Earth I come.'"

## **Advent Devotional planning**

On Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>, the Diaconate and Board of Christian Education, will be presenting to the congregation a very special Advent devotional planner.



This daily and weekly devotional planner takes individuals, couples and families through the entire Advent season ... to recapture its wonder and meaning. The Advent weeks help us to:

- ★ Slow Down for Reflection
- ★ Keep a Christ-centered Focus
- ★ Manage the Inevitable Distractions
- ★ Celebrate Whatever Your Circumstances
- ★ Enjoy a God-pleasing Christmas
- ★ Wrap Up the Season

Every day has scripture readings, practical suggestions, prayers, and thoughts to ponder. The unique format stands alone as a flip book, one side devoted to families with young children and the other side for adults.

This planner can be used every year and we all hope it becomes an integral part of your Advent from now on.

## Community Supper

The Community Supper in October was a delicious success ... Morgen's lasagna was an instant favorite! It's amazing that no matter how many attend, there is always ample food.

The next supper will be 6pm November 29<sup>th</sup>. Hope to see YOU!



Hope you can join us!



## Game Supper Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>

Wild Game Supper will be here before we know it, November 17 is the big day this year. We have many people helping already but always can use more. Some details are finished and many are set in place to happen.

As of now we still are looking for detail heads for Rolls, Pheasant Rice, and Gravy. Last year Dan and I had to do these as well. We had plenty of helpers but it would be great to pass all or any of these off to someone to head up.

We will also be making our calls for workers for the night of the supper. If you can help in any way just call or email.

The request for fudge for the fudge room has gone out as well. Thanks so much to the many many people who help with the supper. Spread the word for selling tickets!!

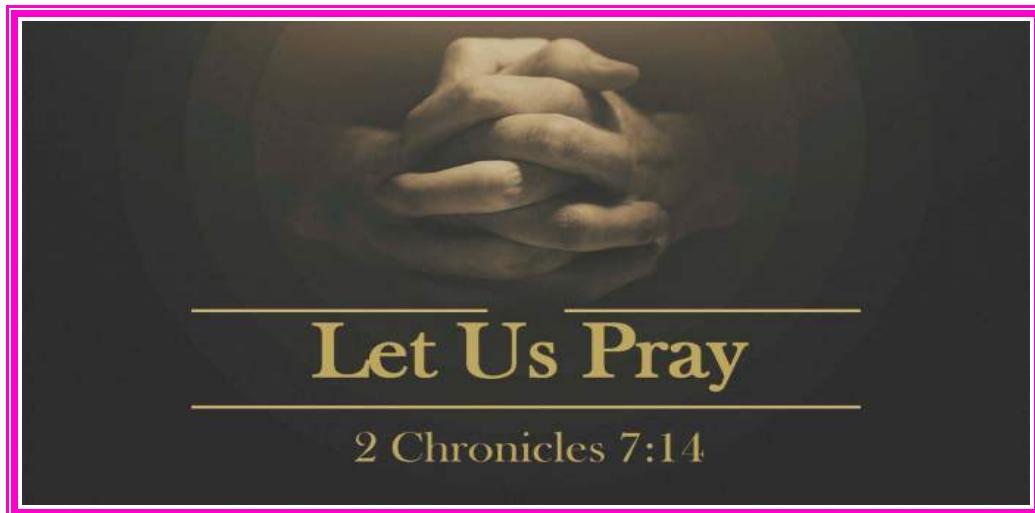
Dan and Tracey Smith  
Co-chairs  
802-222-1800 (Tracey's cell)  
[sixsmiths@charter.net](mailto:sixsmiths@charter.net) (D and T email)

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 NOVEMBER (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*

**God's Word is always a good read!**



## All Saints Day

**Isaiah 25: 6-9** (the cloud of sorrow and death will vanish)

**Revelation 21: 1-6a** (God will make all things new)

**John 11:32-44**

**Psalm 24**

## November 4

**Ruth 1:1-18** (Ruth pledges)

**Hebrews 9: 11-14** (Christ attains eternal redemption for us)

**Mark 12: 28-34** (Jesus gives us the greatest commandment)

**Psalm 146**

theme hymn: *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

## November 11

**Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17** (God bestows life through Ruth and Boaz)

**Hebrews 9:24-28** (in Christ it's a whole new age)

**Mark 12: 38-44** (the widow's mite)

**Psalm 127**

theme hymn: *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*

## **November 18**

**1 Samuel 1:4-20** (Hannah, fertile in spirit)

**Hebrews 10:11-18** (encourage each other to trust God's promises)

**Mark 13:1-8** (fear not)

theme hymn: "*How Great Thou Art*"

## **Thanksgiving**

**Joel 2:21-27** (God is in our midst)

**Psalm 126**

**1 Timothy 2:1-7** (pray for friends and enemies alike)

**Matthew 6:25-33** (serve God by serving God's creation)

## **November 25 ... Christ the King Sunday**

**2 Samuel 23:1-7** (David's last words as the anointed one)

**Revelation 1:4b-8** (you belong to Christ, not Caesar)

**John 18:33-37** (Jesus bears witness to the truth)

## **LECTIONARY YEAR C begins**

**Advent (the period before Christmas)**

## **December 2 ... 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**Jeremiah 33:14-16** (God's promise will be fulfilled)

**Psalm 25:1-10**

**1 Thessalonians 3:9-13** (Paul thanks God for faith growth)

**Luke 21:25-36** (live attentively for God's coming)

theme hymn: *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*"

## **December 9 ... 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**Malachi 3:1-4** (The day of YHWH is coming)

**Philippians 1:3-11** (discern human needs ... and respond)

**Luke 3:1-6** (John preaches a baptism of repentance)

theme hymn: "*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*"

## **December 16 ... 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**Zephaniah 3:14-20** (God will renew you)

**Isaiah 12:2-6** (song of Thanksgiving)

**Philippians 4:4-7** (demonstrate gentleness and forbearance)

**Luke 3:7-18** (dispose of your greedy ways)

theme hymn: "*On Jordan's Bank the Baptist Cry*"

## Mission/Social Action

The BMSA has been very busy this past month. Earlier in October, we had our first book club of the year. The board and members of the congregation read the book *Refugee* by Alan Gratz. Our discussion focused around the experiences and hardships that refugees experience in their journey to the United States and after they get here. We also discussed what we, as a church, can do to help refugees who come to settle in Vermont.

## SERRV

Lucia Button has very generously offered to sell SERRV items again this year. SERRV is a nonprofit, fair trade organization. Since 1949, SERRV has empowered small-scale artisans and farmers to earn a fair living from their work, breaking the cycle of poverty and building stronger communities worldwide. Lucia sold these beautiful, handcrafted items at the recent Harvest Bazaar and will also be selling again at the Game Supper. If you would like to see a catalog so you can place an order, please contact Lucia. Thank you so much Lucia for all of your help in supporting SERRV and their mission.

(The name **SERRV** is an acronym for Sales Exchange for Refugee Rehabilitation and Vocation. The program grew from assisting World War II refugees, to working with impoverished people throughout the world. )

## Giving Fair

The BMSA and SERRV will be at the Giving Fair on December 8 at Oxbow High School. The Giving Fair is an opportunity for nonprofits to gather to sell items and ask for donations to help support their causes. You can do your holiday shopping and support a worthy cause all in one day. If you have any questions about the Giving Fair, please contact Holly Young.

## Upcoming Offerings

December: **Christmas Fund**

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:

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- our website is <http://bradforducc.org/>
  - our church's email is [bradfordvtucc@gmail.com](mailto: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](#)