

Dear Church Family, for the week of **November 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Sunday morning worship is at 10:00 a.m.**

**Pastoral Concerns:** Pastor Jeff Long-Middleton 978-273-6399 [pastorjeffuccbradford@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjeffuccbradford@gmail.com)

**Emergency Assistance:** Care Coordinator Carole Taylor 802-222-4590

Pastor Jeff says:

Here's the scripture for Sunday. What follows the scripture are my reflections, sermon title and text. See what you think.

### **1 Kings 17:8-24**

<sup>8</sup>Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, <sup>9</sup>“Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.” <sup>10</sup>So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, “Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink.” <sup>11</sup>As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, “Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.” <sup>12</sup>But she said, “As the Lord your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.” <sup>13</sup>Elijah said to her, “Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. <sup>14</sup>For thus says the Lord the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the Lord sends rain on the earth.” <sup>15</sup>She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. <sup>16</sup>The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by Elijah.

<sup>17</sup>After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill; his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. <sup>18</sup>She then said to Elijah, “What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to cause the death of my son!” <sup>19</sup>But he said to her, “Give me your son.” He took him from her bosom, carried him up into the upper chamber where he was lodging, and laid him on his own bed. <sup>20</sup>He cried out to the Lord, “O Lord my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?” <sup>21</sup>Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried out to the Lord, “O Lord my God, let this child's life come into him again.” <sup>22</sup>The Lord listened to the voice of Elijah; the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. <sup>23</sup>Elijah took the child, brought him down from the upper chamber into the house, and gave him to his mother; then Elijah said, “See, your son is alive.” <sup>24</sup>So the woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth.”

Title: “Cornered Into Goodness”

Text: 1 Kings 17:13 *Elijah said to her, “Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son.*

Let's be honest, I would have told Elijah to forget it. Her son is starving. She is starving. The only thing she has to look forward to is this one last meal. And here's something else. It would have bothered me the way Elijah dealt with her. He expects her, a stranger, to get him a drink? And as if that wasn't enough, as she goes to get the water, Elijah shouts to her that he also wants something to eat – albeit not much, just what she can carry in her hand. I guess he's not looking for a banquet, but she is already doing him a kindness and now he wants more? I don't think I would have done it.

Elijah asks all this before he says anything pious, but when she appears reticent to comply, he talks to her about God's promise. I suppose she had little to lose. He wasn't asking for all the meal in the jar, just a little cake. What can it hurt? She has already indicated that what she has won't save her or her son. Why not give this a shot?

Ever been cornered into goodness? I think she was. And it paid off big time. Her son dies and Elijah, with God's intervention, brings the child back to life. Up to this point I guess she wasn't too sure about Elijah, but after her son is restored to health she says, “Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth.” What's that mean? She didn't think Elijah was for real prior to his restoring life to her son? Sometimes, even when we see a miracle, even when we participate in the miracle (like the jar and the

oil that never empty). we may be unbelieving. I think one of the most honest statements in scripture is that of the man who comes to Jesus seeking the healing of his son. Jesus tells the man that anything is possible for those who believe and the man says, "I believe; help my unbelief."

**Guest Organist:** this Sunday we welcome back our good friend Wanda Kivela, who will also be directing the choir. She will be filling in for John Atwood for the two Sundays he is taking to plan and practice for the upcoming Advent and Christmas season.

**Lectionary readings** for this coming week:

**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*

Volunteers to host the Coffee Hour following the worship service are needed. Please contact Charlotte Welch if you can help with this important fellowship mission.

PLEASE NOTE: the next Community Supper will be **Nov. 29**

The calendar in the downstairs hall ... please do not write on it until you have contacted Building Use trustee Janice Larabee. Thank you!

Volunteers Needed: Game Supper is on Saturday, Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> Help is needed that day as well as the days before it. Please contact **Dan or Tracy Smith!**

### **Water is Life: A Service of Gratitude**

Sunday, November 25, 2018 3:30 PM

West Fairlee Center Congregational Church, Middlebrook Road, West Fairlee Center\*

This is an annual service of prayer and music led by members of the many religious faiths and spiritual perspectives represented in our area. Come and hear your friends and neighbors speak, sing and lead us in prayer. A potluck and game dinner will follow next door. \*The West Fairlee Center Church is 4 miles north of Lake Fairlee. Take Route # 244 around the north shore of Lake Fairlee to Middlebrook Road, then drive straight up the valley to the church green. There is plenty of parking. For directions or further information, call Cleo at 802 333 3527.

### **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

- Click on **EPISTLE** to get this month's Lectionary readings.
- Past Sermons can be accessed at [News & Sermons](#) .
- The latest "back story" can be accessed at "[Upcoming Worship](#)" or at [Church News](#)
- Our congregation's activities are listed on our [online calendar](#)
- Our Facebook page link is [Bradford Congregational Church](#)