

EPISTLE

June, 2019



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

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Word From The Pastor

The Christian year – you know, Advent, Christmas, Christmas-tide, Ordinary Time, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Eastertide, Pentecost, the seven Sundays following Pentecost, Ordinary Time, and back to Advent. Well, it's just about over – Eastertide, that is. On June 9th, we celebrate Pentecost which got me to thinking. I wondered where the word came from. I get the “Penta” part. Fifty and that fits because the way it gets calculated (which is a little complex) it works out to fifty days after Easter. But I had no idea where the “cost” came from and when you put the two together, “pente” and “cost,” what do you get? So I did what any good citizen of the twenty-first century would do, I Googled it.

“ORIGIN OF PENTECOST

before 1000; Middle English pentecoste, Old English pentecosten < Late Lat in pentēcostē < Greek pentēkostē (hēmērā) fiftieth (day)”¹

That help? It didn't help me much. Time to dig deeper. The first Pentecost – you know, the one recorded in Acts 2 – coincided with the Jewish celebration of Shavuot (Feast of Weeks) commemorating when the Torah was given by God to all the people. Many came to Jerusalem to mark the occasion. It is why the

¹From <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/pentecost> Accessed May 26, 2019.

disciples (which probably included many followers of Jesus who were not part of the original twelve) were in town. So, now we know why they were there. But things didn't go as planned. It seems God had other ideas. While they were gathered in a room, a great wind blew and it looked like tongues of fire came down and alighted on each of them. What's this about? I think I know. Suddenly, each of them had the ability to speak in a foreign language. How do we know? Well, the folks outside the room were from many different parts of the known world. Like we said earlier, this was the Feast of Weeks and lots of foreign visitors were in Jerusalem. So these foreign visitors were astounded when they heard this group of disciples speaking in their own language. And here's the question: Why would God make this possible if God didn't want to spread the Good News of Christ?

Oh, one other thing to note, this group of disciples were not speaking in tongues (glossolalia). A lot of folks think that's what happened, but no, this was different. They actually gained the ability to speak in various foreign languages. By the way, I have a minister friend who can speak in tongues. We were in a meeting in my office and I asked her if I could witness this gift that I don't have. She proceeded to speak in what seemed like a language but neither of us understood what was being said. Her church is much like ours so she hasn't let her congregation know. She doesn't think it would end well for her – which is a shame.

Anyway, our celebration of Pentecost marks the beginning of the Christian Church. After the wind of the Spirit blew through that room, things would never be the same. Instead of a provincial faith confined to Jewish believers, it became a worldwide movement. June 9th is no ordinary Sunday. It allows for the fulfillment of the Great Commission given by Jesus when He ascended into heaven:

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Now we can.

Faithfully,
Pastor Jeff



From your Diaconate

A reminder: every Communion Sunday the small “Diaconate Fund” envelopes are placed in the pews. It is through your generosity that the Fund is available for helping those in need, be it heating oil, electricity, shelter, food, or medicine. Every donation, no matter its size, is graciously accepted!

June 2nd the Rev. Heidi Hoskin will be filling the pulpit and serving communion. Heidi Hoskin was ordained to the ministry in the United Church of Christ in 1976. She has served churches in New Hampshire, Vermont and Miami, Florida. For several terms she was the moderator of the Grafton-Orange-Sullivan Association. She still treasures this experience working with and visiting many churches. She met thoughtful, active people, committed to the good of the Church. She lives in Hanover Center and is married to Garlan Hoskin. They have one daughter and one son and two grandsons. She is delighted to be with the Bradford folks to minister and to catch up.

Oxbow's Baccalaureate this year (June 9th) is at the Evangelical church. This service rotates between the churches large enough to hold the grads and their families.

See the Christian Education/Sunday School report for the upcoming church picnic and Children's Sunday.

A Confirmation Class will be starting soon. Stay tuned!

Blessings to you all, from your Board of Deacons.

Christian Ed ... Church Picnic and Children's Sunday!

The Sunday School is excited to welcome everyone to our annual Children's Sunday, to be held this year on June 9th. This joyful service will be a celebration of the church's children, led by them. There will be readings and songs and special recognition for each child and Sunday School teacher.

This year we are also reviving a past tradition of following the Children's Sunday service with a **picnic at Elizabeth's Park!** Please join us for the service and the picnic immediately following. Sandwich makings and drinks will be provided, you may bring a side dish to share if you'd like. See you on June 9th !

Scenes from last year's Children's Sunday ... this year it's June 9th!



The Strengthen the Church offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill on its commitment to [creating a](#) just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will

plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Our congregation will receive the STC offering on Pentecost Sunday, June 9th, 2019.

Thank you, Ginny for BMS

Lectionary Readings JUNE (Year C)



June 2

Acts 16:16-34 (defeat transformed into victory)

Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21 (the Alpha and the Omega)

John 17:20-26 (we are united in Christ)

Psalm 97

theme hymn: *We All Are One in Mission*

June 9 - Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21 (let me tell you about Jesus!)

Romans 8:14-17 (live in harmony)

John 14:8-17 (more on the Paraclete)

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

theme hymn: *Come O Spirit, Dwell Among Us*

June 16

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31 (Wisdom was present at the creation)

Romans 5:1-5 (stand up straight ... and rejoice!)

John 16:12-15 (the Spirit of Truth will guide us)

Psalm 8

theme hymn: *Ancient of Days*

June 23

1 Kings 19:1-4,8-15a (Elijah has YHWH on his side)

Galatians 3:23-29 (in Christ we are all heirs, through faith)

Luke 8:26-39 (the demons recognize who Jesus is)

Psalm 42

theme hymn: *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*

June 30

2 Kings 2:1-2,6-14 (Elijah tests Elisha)

Galatians 5:1,13-25 (we are free to be servants of one another)

Luke 9:51-62 (Jesus' time "to be received up" is nearing)

Psalm 77:1-2,11-20

theme hymn: *O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee*

July 7

2 Kings 5:1-14 (Naaman's servants talk him back to the river)

Galatians 6:1-16 (we are accountable for what we say and do)

Luke 10:1-11,16-20 (then 70 are appointed)

Psalm 30

theme hymn: *Beneath the Cross of Jesus*

July 14

Amos 7:7-17 (a foundation of justice is out of plumb)

Colossians 1:1-14 (intercessory prayers explained)

Luke 10:25-37 (responsibilities outweighing being a helping hand)

Psalm 82

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

July 21

Amos 8:1-12 (faithlessness, disobedience, hypocrisy: be warned!)

Colossians 1:15-28 (do not shift from the hope of the gospel)

Luke 10:38-42 (Martha. Mary. Come out of the kitchen and listen)

Psalm 52

theme hymn: *Be Thou My Vision*

**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.**



Sometimes events and/or changes come up after the Epistle has been uploaded. It's always good to check the Weekly Email for last minute updates.

To be added to the **Weekly Email** list, [click here](#). If you have an area event to list in the weekly Email's "Around Town" section, please let us know!

This is the Call to Worship the Rev. David Pruitt* used the last time he filled our pulpit. Several folks asked for it to be repeated here for all to read and pray.

Leader: Come, to receive grace, all who have been Christians since their youth.

People: Come, to receive grace, all who discovered God's hope in the midst of middle years' brokenness.

Leader: Come, to receive grace, all who have returned to the Church after many skeptical years.

People: Come, to receive grace. God does not offer salvation by clock or calendar. Blessing is offered for all who seek new life.

*Rev. Pruitt is the Interim Minister at West Newbury Congregational Church

This Epistle is a monthly publication of the Bradford Congregational Church. It is uploaded just before the 1st of each month. Anyone wishing to receive the email notification of 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
 - 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](#)