

# EPISTLE

September, 2019



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

Our website: <http://bradforducc.org>  
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## WORD FROM THE PASTOR

We are often confronted with large and complex issues. They are not easily resolved and our spheres of influence can be limited. We watch as our nation deals with the influx of aliens, some of whom are seeking asylum from violence in their countries of origin. There are those who are working to make our response more humane, but most of us cannot give either the time or the effort to impact change. The result is often a feeling of powerlessness. We can come to see ourselves as spectators rather than active participants in the forming either a caring response.

Maybe I am projecting my struggles onto you. This may be a problem limited to my own need to engage my Christian faith with the wider world. But I was buoyed the other day by a touching article in the *New York Times*, dated August 19, 2019. Here's the link:

[He Gave a Refugee a Bicycle](#) (Read the article and then read on)

Of course, not all events impact our global community. Some are confined to our local experience. Just this past week, the home of Linsey Taylor and Craig Kelley, Lillie Kelley, Leslie-Mae Kelley and the apartment of Jake Nilsson burned to the

ground. By God's grace, no one lost their lives, but most if not all of the folks' worldly possessions were lost forever. Yet even as I write these words the Board of Deacons has formulated a helpful response. We cannot take away the loss they have suffered but in even the simplest act of caring, like giving a bicycle to a refugee child, lives can be changed. It lifts my spirit knowing that my power to impact positive change is only limited by the kindness of my deeds. In that, I find hope.

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!

**If you know of someone in our area who is in need, please contact any Deacon, Pastor Jeff, or our church's Care Coordinator Carole Taylor.**

### **Mark your calendars!**

September 8<sup>th</sup> will be a very special Sunday. Because Pastor Jeff will be away on the 1<sup>st</sup> we will postpone Communion until the 8<sup>th</sup>. In addition, that day will be our annual Sunday Sundaes celebration and Blessing of the Backpacks. And the fun will continue downstairs when everyone will be invited to make their own Sundaes! Invitations will be sent out this week!

Our Covenant, and our Statement of Faith: we will renew unison reading of these on Communion Sundays.

September 1<sup>st</sup> will be quite special as well ... Martina Stever and Dan Perry will be reprising their ... unique sermon from years ago ... you won't want to miss this!!!

Anyone attending worship since the Steinway was wrapped and sent out for restoration has been enjoying hearing and watching John Awood playing his harpsicord. We're thrilled he has decided to keep it in the church even after the piano is returned!

Do you have a spiritual concern? We urge you to contact Pastor Jeff or any one of us on the Diaconate to listen to you, pray with you and for you in confidence.

Blessings to you all, from your Board of Deacons.

### **Musically speaking ...**

Summer is ending all too soon! We begin September (Sept. 1) with Betsy Alexander singing pieces by Handel, Mozart, Gluck and Mendelssohn-Bartoldy accompanied on either harpsichord or organ. Betsy is a regular singer to the Bradford United Church of Christ, and we welcome her return!

September 8 is "Rally Day" when everyone returns to their routines having been refreshed by summer. Yours truly will begin the service with a rousing piece of Bach "In Dir ist Freude" (In Thee is joy). Now, "joy" can here be taken on at least three levels: spiritual level, on a casual listener's level, and on the distinctly secular level. Think of the horses first let out to the spring pastures, or the tail-wagging reception by your favorite Labrador Retriever on your return from the grocery store. THAT is the kind of joy this piece expresses! The piece gives the organ (and yours truly) quite a workout! The offertory will be a piece by Schumann; one of the four Sketches. Very different and mostly quiet kind of piece with a middle section that reminds one of a carousel.

September 15 is still in the planning since I will be away that Sunday. Dan Perry is in charge of finding a substitute, and I'm sure he will find a fine musician.

During the rest of the month I will explore some of the Italian organ music--Frescobaldi, Cavazzoni, Zipoli, etc.

And don't forget, the choir returns on September 8!

John Atwood



*Photo by Randy!*

## Lectionary Readings SEPTEMBER (Year C)



### September 1

Jeremiah 2:4-13 (triggered by a leadership team who ignore God)

Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16 (imitate Jesus and you'll be on track)

Luke 14:1,7-14 (take a humble, not exalted, seat)

Psalms 81:1,10-16

theme hymn: Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life

### September 8

Jeremiah 18:1-11 (repent: turn around away from evil ways)

Philemon 1 - 21 (receive the slave as you would Paul)

Luke 14:25-33 (be willing to bear your own cross)

Psalms 139: 1-6,13-18

theme hymn: Our God, Our Help in Ages Past

### September 15

Jeremiah 4:11-12,22-28 (the stupid and foolish can still do evil)

1 Timothy 1:12-17 (God gives strength for His work)

Luke 15:1-10 (joy is in finding a single lost sinner)

Psalms 14

theme hymn: Amazing Grace

### September 22

Jeremiah 8:18 - 9:1 (is there a balm in Gilead?)

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

Luke 16:1-13 (a crook hears "audit" and rushes to do good and save himself)

Psalms 79:1-9

theme hymn: O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go

September 29

Jeremiah 32:1-3a,6-15 (today: exile .... tomorrow: your future)

1 Timothy 6:6-19 (yet again: beware the love of money)

Luke 16:19-31 (this old Egyptian folktale ain't so funny)

Psalm 91:1-6,14-16

theme hymn: O Word of God Incarnate

October 6

Lamentations 1:1-6 (smothering the fires of hope)

2 Timothy 1:1-14 (kepp on telling the gospel, no matter the cost)

Luke 17:5-10 (we are God's servant, not the other way around)

Psalm 137

theme hymn: Faith of Our Fathers

October 13

Jeremiah 29:1,4-7 (seek the shalom)

2 Timothy 2:8-15 (God's word is never shackled)

Luke 17:11-19 (one turns back to thank Jesus)

Psalm 66:1-12

theme hymn: Let All Things Now Living

October 20

Jeremiah 31:27-34 (He will no longer even remember their sin)

2 Timothy 3:14 - 4:5 (stand firm and preach the gospel)

Luke 18:1-8 (parable of an unrighteous judge)

Psalm 119:97-104

theme hymn: O Word of God Incarnate

## ADULT STUDY

A class will be offered by Pastor Jeff on **Monday nights beginning September 23 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the church's vestry (the downstairs).**



Here's how it will work. You may already know that each Sunday there are assigned lectionary readings. They are usually comprised of an Old Testament lesson, a Psalm, a reading from one of the Epistles and a Gospel lesson. That's a lot

of scripture and it would be impossible to explore them all in an hour.

So we will be looking at a Sunday that is four weeks away and explore the readings that are assigned for that future Sunday. This means that on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, our first meeting, we will be looking at the scripture lessons assigned for Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>. If you want to prepare in advance, here is a listing of the readings we will be exploring:

Jeremiah 31:27-34 [Alternate: Genesis 32:22-31]

Psalm 119:97-104 [Alternate: Psalm 121]

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

Luke 18:1-8

After we have explored the readings and gained some understanding of their meaning, we'll ask what common theme, if any, they share, what import they may have for our lives and then explore what shape the sermon for October 20<sup>th</sup> should take. Please let Pastor Jeff ([pastorjeffucebradford@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjeffucebradford@gmail.com)) know of your interest.



### Another education offering ...

**REFLECTION TIME** will take place each Sunday beginning September 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a. m. until 12:30 p.m. alongside the coffee hour following church. It will be a time to share our reflections about the

service that Sunday. It will be very informal and open to anyone who wants to discuss the sermon or elements of the service that moved them. The sessions will be facilitated by the pastor and is sponsored by the Board of Deacons.

### **Steinway Restoration underway!**

Our 1925 model O Steinway Grand Piano is in much need of restoration. Donated to the Bradford UCC Church by its beloved former music director and long time Bradford resident Katrina Munn. Our Steinway is one of the very few in the United States that was made in Hamburg, Germany. Pianos made in Germany are considered by many to be superior in sound, character and feel. Our goal is to invest the necessary restoration efforts in order to bring the piano back to its melodic beauty so that musicians near and far can come to Bradford to experience its quality and perform for the community.



On June 8, the piano left the sanctuary for its journey to Lindeblad Piano Restoration in Pine Brook, NJ where the 4th generation family owned shop has been providing world

class restoration of Steinway pianos since 1920. There it will undergo a historically accurate restoration and then will be returned to the sanctuary.

Since 1950 "Miss Munn" taught hundreds of local children on this piano and our community will enjoy the music from it for many years to come. Her desire to share her love of music through teaching, lives on through our Steinway.

Your donations are tax deductible and will go directly to the cost of this restoration. Please help by donating here ( [Steinway Restoration Fund](#) ) or you may also send a donation in the US Mail to Bradford UCC- piano fund. PO Box 387. Bradford VT 05033. Randy and Storme Odell have kicked off the campaign with a generous donation and they hope you will join them in our effort to preserve the beauty, honor and joy that the Steinway that brings to our community.

Do you have photos and stories of when you were a student playing this piano?  
Please let us know

## !LOOKING AHEAD

This years church bazaar will be held on October 19, 2019  
9am-2pm with lunch being served from 11am – 1 pm.

When donating to the yard sale we often save things for this event. If you have items that you think should go in the bazaar, just put them in a box and mark them “for the bazaar” and we will save them for later.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR DONATIONS AND FOR SUPPORTING  
OUR FUNDRAISING EVENTS.

**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.**



## **Sunday School news**

Our church is blessed to not only have a great group of kids who consistently attend church, but also to be able to provide them with year-round Sunday School! However, we currently have only three Sunday School teachers, who lead lessons nearly 50 Sundays per year, and we are feeling a bit overwhelmed.

Would you be willing to teach Sunday School, even for just one Sunday? Do you have a particular talent, skill, or passion that you could share with this wonderful group of children? Maybe you would even be willing to join the regular Sunday School teacher schedule?

Please talk to one of us, we would love to partner with you!

Thank you,

The Sunday School Team

Angela Colbeth, Kim Frydman, and Bridget Peters

## **And Youth Group:**

Our new Youth Group starts Sunday, September 8! During our time together, we will be reading Bible passages, interpreting them, and thinking about how the passages apply to our lives.

This fall, we will be exploring how to form a community. We will be reading Exodus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Genesis, the Book of Jonah, Luke, and Acts.

The first fun Youth Group family event is a cookout and bonfire on September 21!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [ppeters881@gmail.com](mailto:ppeters881@gmail.com).

Patrick Peters

Youth Group leader

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 (send to [mccmarciam3@gmail.com](mailto:mccmarciam3@gmail.com) )!

This Epistle is a monthly publication of the Bradford Congregational Church. It is uploaded just before the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. The deadline to submit news or articles to [mccmarciam3@gmail.com](mailto:mccmarciam3@gmail.com) is the 25<sup>th</sup>. Anyone wishing to receive the email delivery of the Epistle may request it by emailing the church email below.

Some helpful links:

- 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](#)