

First Congregational Church
1 Monument Circle
Old Bennington, VT 05201

March 2017

*Vermont's Colonial Shrine: Welcoming all to share God's light,
and proclaiming God's embracing love since 1806*



SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY RESULTS

Thank you to all who participated in the Souper Bowl of Caring fundraiser on Super Bowl Sunday, a total of \$206 was raised. To make things interesting again this year two soup pots were available to drop donations in, one representing the New England Patriots and the other the Atlanta Falcons. The Patriots soup pot was the winner with \$119 and the Falcons soup pot collecting \$87. The Bennington County Interfaith Council's Kitchen Cupboard is the real winner as 100% of the donations raised in our church went to this worthy cause.

FREE SUNDAY SUPPER

Thank you Bill Hartz, Sue Katz, Wendy Schmitt and Tom Schmitt for volunteering to host the Free Sunday Supper which takes place at the Second Congregational Church on March 12th and to all who have volunteered to provide food for the dinner.



**Daylight Saving
Time begins on
Sunday, March 12th!**



The Lantern

Newsletter of the First Congregational Church (Old First Church)

March 2017

FROM THE MINISTER

Last year Lent began in early February and this year just this past week. Lent proceeds not by the weather in any one place but by a calendar keyed to the lunar cycle. In this way, every year the Lenten season varies—it comes in the cold and warmth alike, Easter may greet us with snow or showers or spring soft green. The season is not about the weather or the moon or the stars, it is about our life and faith and Christ's work in this world.

This is the time for reckoning and renewal, for some self-examination before any celebration, for some long thoughts about our life and work and what use we make of time. Our answers vary. As Jesus in the desert shows there are choices and varied answers we can make. Lent is this time to ponder the choices before us and the people we might be. Life carries us along quickly and so many voices compete for our attention. In this season we are asked to turn inward and in a calm way consider life's deeper joys and meaning.

This season has not always been part of a New England congregational heritage—I would say that some elements of this serious self-examination and direction giving to life and heart was, for many Congregationalists, a weekly, daily and even hourly reality. Lent is nonetheless here for us to renew these themes and in the reality of mud and stony soil giving way to bright life and joy God gives us hints of life's purpose. May this season be full of peace and understanding for you.

The Rev. Ken Clarke

ANNUAL MEETING

The congregation met for its annual meeting in the church sanctuary following worship on February 19th. We received the written reports submitted by officers and committees, elected new people to office and adopted the budget for the year.

Thank you to all committee members who offered their time and talents throughout the year. Special thanks to those who have completed their terms or are stepping down:

Kiki Traver – Moderator
Sandy Bechtel – Trustee
Dick Guerrero – Trustee
Jon Traver – Assistant Treasurer
Claudia Dalton – Deacons
Pat Guerrero – Deacons
Marsha Pilachowski – Deacons
Wendy Schmitt – Deacons
Allison Stitcher – Deacons
Chelsea Lutz – Christian Ed
Jeannette Lesser – Fellowship
Bill Gordon – Nominating
Donna Jones – Personnel Committee
Hal Ehrenfreund – Council Member at Large

If you were unable to attend the meeting and would like a copy of the report, stop by the church office for a copy.



Knitting Group: Come join our knitting group! Our meeting will take place at the Barn on **Wednesday, March 15, 12:00 p.m.** Bring along knitting needles, yarn and a light lunch for yourself. Soup and cookies will be provided.

1 Monument Circle, Old Bennington, Vermont 05201

www.oldfirstchurchbenn.org • office@oldfirst.comcastbiz.net • (802) 447-1223

Kenneth A. Clarke, Minister

Don Miller, Moderator

Prepping for Easter

April 16th is Easter Sunday and there is much to do in preparation.

A *Meditations for Lent* booklet (our 14th annual edition comprised of devotionals submitted by members and friends of Old First) is available at the church and in the office.

If you would like to remember loved ones with Easter lilies, please send your gift to the Church no later than Sunday, April 9. Let us know how you would like us to list the name of the loved one(s) and the giver(s).

We will be asking for candy donations for the annual Easter egg hunt in the coming weeks.

The Holy week schedule will be posted when established.

Recipe from Coffee Hour Host Bill Hartz

Roasted Vegetable Spread (makes ¾ cup)

Ingredients:

- 1 red bell pepper, cut into rings
- 1 medium onion, cut into rings
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 small zucchini, sliced
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 8 oz. cream cheese (Neufchatel)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

- Heat oven to 400°F
- Toss the bell pepper, onion, garlic and zucchini with the oil in a large mixing bowl until well coated
- Spread the vegetables evenly on a half sheet pan lined with aluminum foil and roast, tossing occasionally, until they are soft and just beginning to brown around the edges, about 45 minutes. Remove from the oven and cool completely.
- Transfer the vegetables to a food processor along with the cream cheese and process until a spreadable amalgam is produced, but stop short of complete smoothness.
- Taste and season with salt and pepper
- To serve, spread on soft bread, crackers, or stuff into a pita. Can be stored in the refrigerator in an airtight container for a week.

MONUMENTAL TAG SALE

Save the date!!! This year the Old First Monumental Tag Sale is returning Saturday, June 10th. The warm winds of June seem like a distant dream today but the months will pass quickly. **NOW** is the time to clean out your attic and those over-stuffed closets and to set aside items for the sale. Ask your friends and neighbors to do the same.

We are in the process of forming this year's tag sale committee. If you are willing to help in the same capacity as last year or if there are folks out there who are looking to join a great bunch of people please contact Marsha (447-3868) or Nancy (in the church office 447-1223). We had a great time last year!

This will be our 10th annual Tag Sale, if we want to be thinking of something big or different to do we should be talking about it now. Our first organizational meeting will take place in the Church Parlor, 10:00 a.m. on March 19th before worship.

SOMETHING'S COOKIN'


If you are interested in helping plan fellowship activities/schedule events, come to a quick meeting in the Sanctuary following worship on March 26th.



Women's Book Group

The **WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP** will meet on March 16th at 6:30 p.m. at Suzanne Kirkpatrick's home to discuss *On Kingdom Mountain* by Howard Frank Mosher. Newcomers are always welcome. For a listing of all the books being read this year go to the church website at www.oldfirstchurchbenn.org and click on the "Church Life" tab or contact Nancy in the church office and she can get you a paper copy. For more information, contact the church office or Wendy Schmitt.

March 2017

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|
|  | | | 1 Choir practice 7-8:30 PM, Church | 2 Foster & Adoptive Family Training Barn, 6-9 PM | 3 | 4 Stratton family Barn use, afternoon |
| 5 Guariniello family Barn use Communion Sunday 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister | 6 | 7 Old Bennington Trustee mtg. 7 PM, Barn | 8 Deacon's mtg. 4 PM, Barn Trustee's mtg. 5:30 PM, Barn Choir practice 7-8:30 PM, Church | 9 Foster & Adoptive Family Training Barn, 6-9 PM | 10 Tyson/Asen wedding rehearsal @ the Church | 11 Theoet family Barn use, afternoon Tyson/Asen wedding, 4 PM @ the Church. Rev. Ken Clarke officiating |
| 12 Gaghich family Barn use, afternoon Daylight Saving Time begins 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister | 13 Old Bennington Planning mtg. 7 PM, Barn | 14 | 15 Old First Knitting Group 12 PM, Barn Choir practice 7-8:30 PM, Church | 16 Foster & Adoptive Family Training Barn, 6-9 PM Women's Book Club, 6:30 PM, Suzanne Kirkpatrick's home | 17 <i>St. Patrick's Day</i> | 18 |
| 19 Tag Sale organizational Mtg. 10 AM @ the Church 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister | 20 | 21 | 22 Choir practice 7-8:30 PM, Church | 23 Foster & Adoptive Family Training Barn, 6-9 PM | 24 | 25 |
| 26 Fellowship organizational Mtg. @ the Church following worship 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 Foster & Adoptive Family Training Barn, 6-9 PM | 31 | |

DEACONS ON CALL:

Donna Jones & Lynda Swanda

USHERS:

3/5: Donna Jones, Lynda Swanda & Amy Tronsen

3/12: Sam Jones & Don Swanda

3/19: Tom & Wendy Schmitt

3/26: Lou & Marie Guariniello

READERS:

3/5: Don Miller

3/12: Claudia Dalton

3/19: Dave Pilachowski

3/26: Patrice Nolan

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS:

3/5: Donna Jones & Lynda Swanda

3/12:

3/19: Anastasia Gauthier

3/26:

FLOWERS:

3/5: Amy & Bill Tronsen

3/12: Bill Hartz

3/19:

3/26: