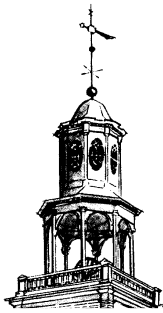


First Congregational Church
1 Monument Circle
Old Bennington, VT 05201

May 2018

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





The Lantern

Newsletter of the First Congregational Church (Old First Church)

May 2018

FROM THE MINISTER

It's all about the weather. The common ground of conversation we all walk; spring is late, winter is colder, we'll make it up and in no time it will be spring. How many ministers devote columns to the weather in some form or another? So here I am wishing all the surprise glory of spring when it comes.

Beyond the beauty of each season, and especially the spring in Bennington, weather is our safe discussion and a gift or burden we share equally. In church we seek to move beyond the weather. The outside elements matter, but our concern is inward directed. In each person's life are the storms, the heat, the early blooms and late harvests of joy which are things of a more private life; a personal climate beyond the claim of any May day.

We make no forecasts in this place except to say the space we provide each other every Sunday in the meetinghouse is a good place to attend to this different kind of weather. And if you find it stormy beyond what you can handle, remember the love of Christ who stills the storm.

The weekend you are reading this--perhaps even today--is the concert "for Scott" at Spaulding Auditorium at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire. Singers and musicians from different places in Scott Smedinghoff's life will perform music which reflects his spirit and a new work especially commissioned will form part of the program which begins at 8 pm. Perhaps you will be able to join some of the Bennington folk who will be there. On a related note, our prayers are with Charlotte Knighton, whose husband David Knighton died earlier this week. The service is at Second Congregational this Saturday morning. Charlotte has been for us a constant help and good friend as she has been with us in at the organ through the years.

These things, and the needs of church members who are ill or sidelined for various reasons makes us wish for good weather on the surface of all things. So the green field and the flowering trees and shrubs minister to us and carry an image of an eternal truth--love and beauty endure. Let us give thanks this season.

The Rev. Ken Clarke

SPRING HISTORICAL FIELD TRIP



**WEDNESDAY
MAY 23**

So far, fourteen people have signed up to go on the May 23rd trip to the Rockingham Meeting House and to the Second Congregational Church in Windsor. The cost of the trip is \$15 (\$10 is for an honorarium to each place and \$5 is for the buffet lunch provided by our friends at Windsor Congregational Church). Payment can be placed in the offering plate on Sunday or sent to the church office prior to the trip (make check payable to **First Congregational Church** and indicate **Field trip** in the memo). **Departure will take place at 8:30 a.m. leaving from the Church.**

Travel will be by carpool and Jane Radocchia will provide a detailed schedule to follow so the groups can keep on track and stay together. Carpools are beginning to form now so participants should talk with one another. Participants are:

Jane Radocchia	Kathy Wagenknecht
Ann Herrick	Sue Katz
Claudia Dalton	Patrice Nolan
Reg Jones	Roberta Webb
Don Miller	Connie Barrett
Vicky Printz	Jeannette Lesser
Jill McCain	Muriel Rice

WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP

The **WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP** will meet on May 17 at 6:30 p.m. at Marie Laporte's home to discuss *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman.

Newcomers are always welcome. For more information or a listing of all the books being read this year contact Wendy Schmitt or the church office.

June's book: *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom

1 Monument Circle, Old Bennington, Vermont 05201

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Kenneth A. Clarke, Minister

Don Miller, Moderator

MONUMENTAL TAG SALE

We've all heard the words "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle." Old First Church's Monumental Tag Sale on June 9th is a great opportunity to put these words into action. Reduce the clutter in your own home (all donations are tax deductible) and give others the chance to reuse or recycle those "treasures."

Our *annual tag sale kickoff luncheon* is scheduled for Sunday, June 3rd. It is a time to gather for a simple luncheon (sandwiches, chips & drinks) and then roll up our sleeves to move tables and chairs to setup the room. Many hands make for light work!

Items are already being collected and are being stored in the Barn attic (please no books or clothing). Keep in mind our Silent Auction, if you have something special to donate that you think fits this category, let us know. If you have furniture or larger items to donate, please call the church office or Marsha Pilachowski to arrange for pick up.

Thank you to the many folks who have already volunteered to help with the sale. We have many opportunities that fit every schedule, so let us know how you can participate. We need help during the week prior to the sale for cleaning, sorting, pricing and the setup of the tent. We need bake sale items and donations for the hot dog cart on sale day. We need all hands on deck for sale day as well for part of the day or longer. When our sale ends at 3PM Saturday we will need MANY hands to dismantle and clean up quickly and pack up leftover items to distribute to Goodwill. Like last year, workers present to help with cleanup will be able to choose any leftover items for themselves (monetary donations accepted).

Thank you to all who have volunteered so far. Check the BLOG for more details and volunteer opportunities in the coming weeks. Good times ahead! Don't miss out.

SCOTT SMEDINGHOFF MEMORIAL CONCERT

On Saturday, May 5, at 8 p.m., the Dartmouth College Wind Ensemble will present a concert at Spaulding Auditorium on the Dartmouth campus, Hanover, NH, honoring the memory of Scott Smedinghoff (1987-2016), who was the pianist for the wind ensemble and a close colleague of its director, Matthew M. Marsit. This tribute to Smedinghoff, whose brilliance lit up concerts throughout New England and beyond, includes two premieres and a guest chorus of singers (some from Old First Church!) who made music with Smedinghoff during his life.

Scott had earned his master's degree and was in his fourth year of stellar PhD work at Dartmouth in a branch of abstract mathematics known as noncommutative geometry when he died suddenly in January 2016 from a previously undiagnosed medical condition. He was 28 years old.

For concert tickets and more information, visit hop.dartmouth.edu.

OPEN CHURCH

The warm breezes of May bring visitors to Bennington and the tradition of opening our historic building to those who wish to view the church and learn about its history. Our Open Church team has been hard at work preparing the newly renovated narthex and discussing ways to enhance our visitor's experience. We are in the process of designing a program that will provide a comprehensive tour of the church and on occasion include tours of the historic cemetery.

To lessen the burden on our volunteers we are trying something new with the daily scheduling by eliminating set shifts and creating daily teams that will determine their own hours. This should give our docents more flexibility with their personal schedules and provide opportunities for more people to help "here and there" rather than to be locked into a weekly shift. The operating hours will remain the same: Mon – Sat, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.; Sundays, 1:00 – 4:00 PM (*weekends only* Memorial Day weekend through the month of June).

There are multiple openings and opportunities for people who want to be tour guides for either the church, cemetery or a greeter (no experience required!). Even if you can only be part of a team for an hour at a time to greet visitors, your presence would allow a guide to give a presentation in the sanctuary or to give tours into the cemetery. Anyone interested, please contact Paul Goodrich or anyone else at Open Church. Helpers don't need to be limited to our parishioners. If you have friends, neighbors or family members who would like to participate in our Open Church program, let us know!



Our next Open Church meeting is scheduled for Fri, May 18 at 2 PM where we will have one of our docents give an example Open Church presentation followed by a guided tour of the cemetery. We will repeat the presentations on Sun, May 20 after worship. We hope you will join us for one or both events.

Our Open Church program is a tradition that goes way back and we are delighted to continue this hospitality today!

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy and prayers to our dear friend Charlotte Knighton and her family. On April 26, 2018 Charlotte's husband David passed away following a long illness. A memorial service to celebrate David's life will take place at the Second Congregational Church on Saturday, May 5 at 11:00 a.m.

May 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Old Bennington Trustee mtg. 7 PM, Barn	2	3 UVM Foster to Forever training, 4-10 PM, Barn	4	5 Durkee family Barn use 11 am - 5 pm
6 McGinty family Barn use 11 am - 4 pm Communion Sunday 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	7 Old Bennington Planning mtg. 7 PM, Barn	8 Old Bennington Annual Mtg. 6:30 PM, Barn	9 Deacon's mtg. 4 PM, Barn Trustee's mtg. 5:30 PM, Barn	10 Old Bennington Cemetery Assoc. Mtg. 3-4:30 PM, Barn BCCCA mtg. 5-8:30 PM, Barn	11 Southshire School's Pastapalooza @ the Barn 4-10 PM	12 Printz family Barn use 11:30 am - 3 pm
13 Hoag family Barn use 11 am - 5 pm <i>Mother's Day</i> 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	14 PFOA community mtg. (east side residents) 5:30 -6:30 PM, Barn	15 UVM Fostering to Forever Advanced Class 4-9 PM, Barn	16 MPCC mtg. 5 PM, Barn	17 Women's Book Group, 6:30 PM at Marie LaPorte's home	18 Open Church Docent mtg. 2 PM, Church Narthex	19 Ballance family Barn use 11 am - 5 pm
20 Kinney family Barn use 11 am - 5 pm 11:00 AM worship Reg Jones worship leader	21	22 Old 1 st Church Marker Garden Committee mtg. @ the Barn 6:30 pm	23 Old First Church Spring Field Trip to Rockingham & Windsor	24	25	26 AM: _____ PM: _____ Colvin family Barn use 12 – 6 pm
27 PM: Paul & Stacy 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	28 AM: Sue K & Marsha P PM: Ann H <i>Memorial Day</i>	29	30	31		

DEACONS ON CALL:

Sandy Bechtel and Amy Tronsen

USHERS:

5/6: Sandy Bechtel, Marietta Hibbard & Amy Tronsen

5/13: Connie & Marshall Barrett

5/20: Dick & Pat Guerrero

5/27: Claudia L& Steve Dalton

READERS:

5/6: Don Miller

5/13: Marie Guariniello

5/20: Marsha Pilachowski

5/27: Patrice Nolan

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS:

5/6: Claudia Dalton & Anastasia Gauthier

5/13:

5/20:

5/27:

FLOWERS:

5/6: Pat & Larry Ross

5/13:

5/20:

5/27: