

First Congregational Church
1 Monument Circle
Old Bennington, VT 05201

May 2019

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



Lecture Series at the Old First Church

**Third Wednesdays at 1pm at the Old First Church
Open to the Public**

We are delighted to be offering a summer lecture series at the Old First Church. The lectures will focus on the history of the church and of the Old Bennington Community. There is no charge to attend and the lectures are open to anyone within the church as well as to the general community as part of our historical outreach. Invite a friend!

The Topics will be:

May 15	New Lights versus Old Lights – Religion in early Bennington	Don Miler
June 19	Church, State and Community in Early Bennington and the New Hampshire Grants	Rev Clarke
July 17	Battle of Bennington and its impact on Old Bennington	Robert Hoar
August 21	Old Bennington Cemetery Tour	Charles Dewey / Vicky Printz
September 18	Settlement of Bennington Walking tour of Old Bennington	Bob Tegart



The Lantern

Newsletter of the First Congregational Church (Old First Church)

May 2019

FROM THE MINISTER

Perhaps it's just the perspective time gives (some call that age, no matter) but the slow swing toward spring this year makes me think the warm months are fewer in number than in years past. I'll sing another tune in the heat of August and wish for cold again to ground the mosquitos and bare the hills once more but right now it seems the fair, warm days are gifts infrequently given.

Easter season with its music and joy reminds us that such days are the center of God's intent. This year we could celebrate with such good music and a church full of neighbors and friends and thanks to all who worked to make the events of the week between Palm Sunday and Easter meaningful. Our Thursday evening services were full of deep feeling and teach us of life's balance; we live in sometimes dim and tragic places but we are ever moving to the brightness promised us.

An Easter springtime here in New England with its yellows, greens and fresh breezes calls us from our own concerns to a larger world. The beauty of spring is also steady work; ask any gardener! It is this work that makes the sunny world brighter and so guides begin to open the church, another supper is prepared, items collect for a tag sale, children learn to make and give and in all there is an added beauty.

May this season open you to what the church can offer and what you can join your neighbors and friends in doing. Now get outside...unless of course, it's raining or sleeting!

Rev. Ken Clarke

MONUMENTAL TAG SALE

We've all heard the words "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle." Old First Church's Monumental Tag Sale on June 8th 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 2nd. 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. When our sale ends at 3PM Saturday we will need MANY hands to dismantle and clean up quickly and pack up leftover items for pickup by Salvation Army on Monday. 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.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

We are looking for a Tag Sale Coordinator for the 2020 Tag Sale. This coordinator might want to be involved with this year's sale to gather an understanding of the workings of our sale (presale duties through end of sale duties). Please let the church office know if you are interested.

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Kenneth A. Clarke, Minister

Don Miller, Moderator

TAG SALE MEETING REPORT (4/7/19)

Twenty-four dedicated folks attended our tag sale planning meeting in the sanctuary following the morning service on April 7th. In addition to signing up for various tasks, we discussed our sale day policies and areas of concern.

Some policies discussed:

Our pre-buy policy for workers will remain as in years past: On Friday at Noon anyone who has worked during the week to help clean, sort and price items will have the opportunity to pre-buy desired items in a lottery format.

Lunches during the week will remain informal. Some people will bring bag lunches but folks are welcome to bring food to share.

For the kickoff luncheon on June 2nd, we will have a sign up in the Blog for sandwiches, chips, drinks, and desserts.

Half price policy will remain as in years past. The time to reduce prices to half price will be agreed upon by those workers present on Saturday afternoon when general sales slow and not at a particular time. Certain items may be excluded from half price reduction and located in a well-marked area.

Since we want to continue to encourage people to donate special items for the sale, it was agreed upon that a donor could set the price on their item with the understanding that it would be their responsibility to collect (or arrange for that) any of their unsold items at the end of the sale. Otherwise all unsold items may be donated according to the outline below.

1. Workers at the end of the sale will decide which items should be stored in the attic for next years' sale.
2. Items for donation to the Bennington Museum Christmas Children's Shopping Day will be boxed for transport to the museum.
3. Workers present to help with clean up at the end of the sale will be allowed to choose any leftover items for themselves (monetary donations accepted).
4. Remaining goods will be packed and stored for Salvation Army pickup on Monday.

It was decided by majority vote that we donate \$500 from our proceeds of our sale to the Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Service (GBICS). Marsha will present that recommendation to the Council at their next meeting.

WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP

The Women's Book Group will meet next on Thursday, May 30, 6:30 PM at Suzanne Kirkpatrick's home to discuss the book *The Women in the Castle* by Jessica Shattuck. 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 is: *Educated* by Carol Westover.

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.

We are continuing with the daily teams again this year which will enable our docents to define their own hours. This kind of plan offers 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, 10AM - 4 PM.; Sundays, 1- 4PM (*weekends only* Memorial Day weekend through the month of June).

There are multiple openings especially on Tuesdays and Saturdays and we could always use "on call/additional support" volunteers. Those interested should contact Betsy Ehrenfreund 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 Open Church program is a tradition that goes way back and we are delighted to continue this hospitality today!

OPEN CHURCH DOCENT TRIP



The spring 2019 historical field trip will take place on **Thursday, May 16th**.

Our travels this year take us to Shaftsbury Baptist Church for a 10 AM tour (courtesy of the Shaftsbury Historical Society. A cemetery tour may be included) and a 2 PM tour of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, in Cambridge, NY. **Departure will take place at 9:30 a.m. leaving from the Church.**

Attendees are asked to donate \$10, if you can, toward the contribution we give to both churches in thanks for their welcome. Lunch options are being researched for our group to purchase their own lunch, others may prefer to bring a bagged lunch. The trip is open to anyone interested in going and might be especially interesting to our Open Church docents. Please sign up on the Sunday morning BLOG insert or let the office know if you would like to go.

SPRING CLEANUP

Thank you to Marshall Barrett, Carlos Castellanos, Dick Guerrero, Bill Hartz, Sue Katz, Jeff Munson, Dave Pilachowski, Larry Ross, Tom Schmitt and Don Swanda for helping with the recent spring cleanup at the Barn and Church.

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY

Our dear friend Mary Geannelis passed away on April 14th following a long illness. Please keep our church members, Peter & Monique and family in your prayers as they go through this difficult time of healing and transition.

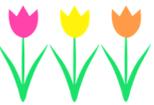
CHRISTIAN ED: The Old First Church is launching their education series to take place Thurs. evenings May-June. The purpose of expanding our education footprint in the community is not to ask people to learn the bible, but instead to teach the lessons Jesus taught, which was his ultimate goal. Those lessons are deeply rooted in grace, kindness, acceptance, reflection, meditation, inclusion and LOVE. The series will expand to touch on so many different areas in our community.

May 9 and May 23: 6–7pm (at the Barn) -Mommy and Me Yoga and mindful meditation (or Grandma and me/auntie and me). Sam Strubel (yoga teacher and N. Bennington School Elementary teacher) will lead an open forum of mommy and me yoga for ALL ages. Ages newborn to 18 for kiddos and any age for adults. The cost is \$10 per mommy and me pair, snacks and drinks provided. After 45 minutes the group will take a 5 minute break to let kiddos get a snack and change into jammies. Then we will listen to music and read a poem or reflective reading from our Lenten devotional booklet.

May 16: 6–7pm (at the Barn) Addiction Support for Parents of Addicts—How to help parents of adult age children with addiction issues. Natalie Philpot will lead this evening, she is a mother to 2 beautiful girls and a survivor of addiction. She is going to tell her story of rock bottom, rehab, survival and moving forward. She will be there as a survivor to answer questions on how parents can help their children, to listen to specific stories and talk through what might work. There will be open discussions as well as one on one time for people who are not comfortable sharing openly. Snacks/drinks provided.

May 30: 6–7pm (at the Barn) Card Making for Veterans – With Memorial Day approaching we are asking people to come and make cards to give out at the Veterans home as a thank you to these wonderful men and women. All ages welcome and a completely free event. All supplies are provided as well as snacks and drinks. For every card you make, get entered into a giveaway! Come to see what we will be giving away!

May 31: 5:30pm (VERMONT VETERANS HOME - Bennington) – Meet with children to visit the veterans and hand out cards.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 May 2019 						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Communion Sunday 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister		Old Bennington Trustee mtg. 7 PM, Barn		Old First Church Mommy & Me Yoga 6-7 PM, Barn Old Benn. Cemetery mtg. 3-4 PM, Barn	Ong family memorial service reception, Barn 4-9 PM	Hall family Barn Use 10 AM – 5 PM
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister Mother's Day	Old Bennington Planning mtg. 7 PM, Barn	Old Bennington Annual Meeting 6:30 PM, Barn	Sweet family Barn use 2-6 PM	Docent and friends field trip, 9:30 AM Departure Addiction Support for Parents of Addicts 6-7 PM, Barn	Southshire School's Pastapalooza at the Barn 3-9 PM	Mayer family Barn use 11 AM – 4 PM
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Hazen family Barn use 11AM - 5PM 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister		Deacon's Mtg. 4 PM, Barn Trustee Meeting 5:30 PM, Barn		Old First Church Mommy & Me Yoga 6-7 PM, Barn		AM: Muriel R. PM: _____ Guariniello family Barn use 1 – 4 PM
26	27	28	29	30	31	
PM Paul & Stacy 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	AM: Sue K & Marsha P PM: Ann H. Memorial Day			Women's Book Group 6:30 PM Suzanne's house Card Making for Vets 6-7 PM, Barn	Children from Christian Ed & community to hand out cards @ Veteran's Home 5:30 PM	

DEACONS ON CALL:

Bill Gordon & Marietta Hibbard

USHERS:

5/5: Carlos & Kristin ushering; Bill Gordon, Marietta Hibbard & Lynda Swanda serving communion

5/12: Connie, Skyla, Saige, Anastasia & Fischer

5/19: Don & Lynda Swanda

5/26: Larry & Pat Ross

READERS:

5/5: Reg Jones

5/19: Audrey Pietrucha

5/12: Marsha Pilachowski

5/26: David Varker

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS:

5/5: Darlene & Jeff Munson & Pat Ross

5/12: Winifred Langford

5/19: Anastasia & Fischer Gauthier and
Marsha Pilachowski

5/26:

FLOWERS:

5/5:

5/12:

5/19:

5/26: Pat & Larry Ross