

# UNITED COMMUNITY CURRENT



APRIL 2023

Email: [Unitedcommunitychurchucc@gmail.com](mailto:Unitedcommunitychurchucc@gmail.com)

Website: [UnitedCommunity.church](http://UnitedCommunity.church)



## Pastor's Ponderings

### New Life is All Around Us at the Church...

Easter is not just a day. Easter is a season for us in the church. Although we begin April in Lent most of this month will be the Easter season. Easter will even stick around with us through May. This Easter season will be especially meaningful. Even though we aren't quite there yet we already have numerous signs of New Life in our midst.

We are growing together as a congregation in numerous ways. Here are just some of what comes to mind as we consider all that we have to celebrate:

Our meal site has not openly reopened, but has over led to a meaningful resurrection of our kitchen and dining area. We also now have the honor and responsibility of offering this service twice a week. New Life.

Our music ministries are thriving. Our dedicated vocal and bell choirs have grown and they bless us with their gifts. New Life.



This month marks the relaunch of our Sunday School for children on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month. The joy of our youngest congregants is uplifting. New Life.

We have new friends visiting our church frequently and many become consistently involved in the life of our church. We have two upcoming opportunities in worship for folks to join the church. We will welcome our new members on Easter Sunday and on May 7. New Life.

We have a busy, busy building. This busy, busy building is abuzz with community groups and events, music rehearsals, people praying in the Chapel and Sanctuary, our meal site, and the wonderful weekday work of our staff. New Life.

Our "Because" pledge and tithe Campaign invites us to consider John Chapter 4 verse 19: "We love because God first loved us." Pledge cards are available at the bulletin table and other spots. The back of each card features a space where we can write why we give of ourselves and our resources for this ministry.

In this season we are each invited to share our time, talents, and treasure and to share why we give. What a joy it is to know that all the ways we give and share together will continue to bring new life to our church and to our community.

Blessings,

*Rev. Andrew Ponder-Williams*



### Church Council Members

Phil Brown, Moderator

[stjmusic@sover.net](mailto:stjmusic@sover.net)

Alice Kitchel, Assistant Moderator

[alicekitchel@gmail.com](mailto:alicekitchel@gmail.com)

Elisa Rowell, Treasurer

[elisamay1978@gmail.com](mailto:elisamay1978@gmail.com)

Helene Millas, Assistant Treasurer

[frenchcutie289@yahoo.com](mailto:frenchcutie289@yahoo.com)

Karen Sayles, Clerk

[kmsayles@yahoo.com](mailto:kmsayles@yahoo.com)

Pam Dearborn, past Moderator,

[pamelad@nchcvt.org](mailto:pamelad@nchcvt.org)

Pam Dearborn, Member at Large

[pamelad@nchcvt.org](mailto:pamelad@nchcvt.org)

Gail Warnaar, Member at Large

[gailw@theoldhomestead.com](mailto:gailw@theoldhomestead.com)

Karen Sayles, Worship & Care

[kmsayles@yahoo.com](mailto:kmsayles@yahoo.com)

Kris Norris, Stewardship

[KristanNorris312@gmail.com](mailto:KristanNorris312@gmail.com)

Kathleen Haines, Spiritual Formation & Nurture

[klehaines@gmail.com](mailto:klehaines@gmail.com)

Alice Kitchel, Outreach

[alicekitchel@gmail.com](mailto:alicekitchel@gmail.com)

MODERATOR

## Annual Meeting – Sunday, May 14

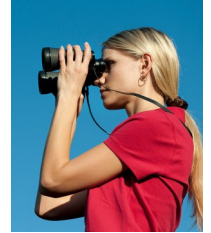


As I sit at my computer writing this article in the days before Holy Week, I cannot help but recall that exactly one year ago we were preparing to gather for a Special Congregational Meeting to vote to call Andrew Ponder Williams as our new settled pastor. What a difference a year makes !!

Andrew listed many of the past year’s accomplishments that we made as a congregation during his sermon on Abundance this past Sunday, so I won’t list them all again. I would encourage you to visit our Facebook page or use this link to listen, or listen again, to An-

drew’s sermon: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/b3si2zfy6dyh4j1/APW%20Sermon%2003-26-2033%20-%20Abundance.mp4?dl=0>

Some of these accomplishments are due to relaxing Covid restrictions and Andrew’s pastoral guidance and leadership has certainly helped us to move forward. However, none of these accomplishments would have occurred and most are directly attributable to generous, direct engagement of the members and friends of this congregation. You, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, are making the future of United Community Church possible.



One of the important ways that we envision our future together is by gathering for our Annual Meeting, electing our leadership for the next year and voting on our budget – which is one of our most powerful visioning documents for FY’2024 and beyond. This year’s Annual Meeting will be held following worship on Sunday, May 14 as we prepare for our new fiscal year starting on July 1st. We realize that this is also Mothers’ Day and we hope you will plan now to include Annual Meeting in your observances for the day.

Blessings for our ministry together,

Phil Brown, moderator

## Holy Week Schedule



### *Hallelujah!* Sunday, April 2 Palm Sunday

Wave your palm as we celebrate the beginning of Holy Week.

### Thursday, April 6 Maundy Thursday Dinner Church and Tenebrae 6:30 pm

Participate in a remembrance of the Last Supper and Jesus’ night in Gethsemane and the service of Darkness. Reservations are requested so we have enough food and seating around the table. You can call the church office at 802-748-2603 and leave a message or email at: [United-communitychurchucc@gmail.com](mailto:United-communitychurchucc@gmail.com)



### Friday, April 7 Good Friday Prayer & Meditation

The sanctuary will be open of personal prayer and meditation from 9 am to 2 pm. Devotionals will be available for those who wish to use them



### Saturday, April 8 Easter Vigil



The sanctuary will be available from 8—10 pm for those who wish to continue their reflections on Holy Week and how it is a part of your faith and life.



### Sunday, April 9 Easter Early Service 7 am

Walk the road in Mount Pleasant Cemetery from Good Friday to Easter and the road to Emmaus and break bread together. Easter Breakfast will follow at United Community Church.

### Sunday, April 9 Easter Breakfast After Early Service

Meet at the church for Easter Breakfast of egg casseroles. If you wish to contribute a casserole, see Karen Sayles for a recipe.



### Sunday, April 9 Easter Worship 10 am



Celebrate Jesus’ Resurrection with joyous music, flowers, and scripture. New Members will be received during this service. If you are interested in becoming a member of United Community Church, see Pastor Andrew.

## Ministry Reports

### Worship & Care

We have been observing the Lenten season during the month of March. Looking forward, we have Palm Sunday on April 2 and Easter Sunday on April 9. During worship on Easter Sunday we will be accepting new members. If you are interested, see Pastor Andrew. New Members will also be accepted on May 7. We thank all who donated for the beautiful Easter flowers. Thanks Carew for setting a beautiful arrangement. She also arranged the Palms for Palm Sunday. Thank you to all who volunteer to make our worship meaningful and a shared experience! Worship and Care meets on the third Tuesday of the month which will be April 18 at 4 pm.



### Outreach

Outreach Ministry presented mission moments throughout the month of March. They were centered around One Great Hour of Sharing. We are now collecting items for the Church World Service kits. See page 6 for the list of items. "Easter Eggs" can also be picked up in the sanctuary—each one contains items needed to complete either the Clean-up buckets, Hygiene kits, or School kits. Please have items at the church by the end of April as we will be assembling kits so they can be picked up the week of May 7<sup>th</sup>. Outreach's next meeting is April 11<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm.



### Spiritual Formation & Nurture

Lenten Study has been going every Tuesday at 10 am in the Chapel. Our final session will be April 3. All are welcome to join us. Sunday School has started back up. The youth have been enjoying having classes again and a chance to spend time together. We meet on the second and fourth Sunday of every month. This will be an invitation for youth 6th grade and below. Following the anthem in the Sunday morning service, we will go to the back conference room and read the scripture together and then do a craft or project. We rejoin our families at coffee hour. Erika continues to look for more adult volunteer in accordance with Safe Church Policy.



The first confirmation class was on March 3. We had a wonderful group of participants from Lancaster, Littleton and St. Johnsbury. We had a chance to re-

view expectations of confirmation and get to the people attending. The next class will on April 2nd at Congregational Church of Lancaster at 3 pm. This class will focus on the Bible with Pastor Peter.

Secret angels will be revealed during coffee hour on Palm Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Archangel Erika has planned special refreshments for all—secret angels and others, too!

### Stewardship

Stewardship has been working hard on preparing the budget for the next fiscal year. We continue to receive proposals from the various ministries. We have also begun our Stewardship Campaign "Because..." Pledge/Tithe cards are available. Take time to prayerfully reflect on your contribution to United Community Church. On the back side of the card is a place for you and your family to finish the statement "I/We give to United Community Church because...". Completed sentences will be shared, anonymously, in future Currents.



Following the building code inspector's visit and report on the apartments, we are slowly bringing our apartments up to the new codes. Paul has been working with contractors to adjust our building to the new codes.

### Reach Out

Donations of items for Ted and Frannie's cupboard and the diaper bank were received this past month. We want to thank Pat Campbell and Pam Dearborn for the donation of Covid tests. If you need a test, see either Erika or Barbara in the office.

This past month we gave out 4 gas cards, diapers to 6 families, and 2 COVID test kits.



### Apartments

This month all of our rentals had the town inspection/ fire marshal inspection. We have some safety improvements that we need to make to be in compliance. Paul and Stewardship Ministry are working on the list.



### 228th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference

*"And Who Is My Neighbor?"*

April 28, 29  
Grace Church,  
Rutland, VT



Have you visited our Facebook page? [UnitedCommunityChurchUCC](https://www.facebook.com/UnitedCommunityChurchUCC)

Did you know you can check the website three different ways?

[UCCSTJ.com](http://UCCSTJ.com)

[UCCSTJ.org](http://UCCSTJ.org)

[Unitedcommunity.church](http://Unitedcommunity.church)





**Special Events  
Coming up  
Don't miss them**

**Kingdom Maple Festival** is returning to St. Johnsbury on **April 22<sup>nd</sup>**. United Community Church will be participating in this year's festival. We will be putting on the pancake breakfast from 8:30—11 am in the Fellowship Hall. We will be offering pancakes and syrup, sausages, juice, coffee, and fruit. All for \$7 which will be going to the "raising the roof" fund (replacement of the north side roof). We are looking for volunteers to help with set up, serving and clean up. If you can volunteer for any of these times please see Alice Kitchel or let the office know and we will pass it on to her. Posters will be coming out soon.

**Vermont Conference annual meeting** will be held at Grace Church in Rutland on **April 28 and 29**. The theme for this year is "And Who is My Neighbor." Workshops will be exploring the connections between creation justice, economic justice, environmental justice, and LGBTQ justice. Friday's workshops include Hope Fund Applications, Global Ministries, Micro churches and Connecting the dots between The Environment, Covid and Community. Saturday's workshops are White Privilege, Climate Change, Blue Collar Ministry, Intergenerational Ministry (led by Pastor Andrew), and Justice and Witness Ministries. The Keynote speaker will be Bill McKibben, author of "The Flag, the Cross, and the Station Wagon", a discussion on what happen to "American patriotism, American faith, and American prosperity." If you are interested in attending, see Phil Brown or let the office know and we will past it on to him.

**Sunday, May 14**, is a special Sunday. Not just because it is Mother's Day but also because it is **Blanket Sunday**. We will be collecting donations for Church World Service Blankets in memory or honor of our Mother's, daughters, or those who have mothered us. Blanket donations purchase blankets to be given to persons who have lost their homes due to natural or human-made disasters. \$10 buys a blanket that can be used to create tents, keep people warm and safe.

Also on **May 14**, United Community Church will be holding its **Annual meeting**. Following worship on May 14 we will reconvene to hear reports of the past year, hopes for the next year, and vote on the budget and ministry members.

**Offerings**

	Mar	July-Mar (YTD)
Offering	2,630.00	41, 584.41
In Kind offerings	0.00	1,158.70
Loose Offerings	470.95	2,500.05
VANCO Offerings	330.00	2,982.75
<b>Total Offerings</b>	<b>3,430.95</b>	<b>48,225.55</b>
Directed Donations	780.77	4,721.04
Wider Mission	468.50	1947.50
Local Mission	25.00	1453.85
<b>Total Mission</b>	<b>493.50</b>	<b>3401.35</b>
	<b>Mission</b>	<b>Offering</b>
<b>2023</b>	\$4,780.00	\$70,000.00
<b>% of budgeted amt</b>	71.2%	68.9%

**Projects from staff:**

- Lollipop Wednesday
- Assisted Worship and Care with coverage and planning services.
- Erika meets weekly with stewardship.
- Welcome bags
- Helped people with questions about building use and scheduling
- Staff development
- Working on 20 yr projection for all buildings
- Organizing and cleaning 3rd floor
- Advertising
- Power point for worship service
- website/ facebook
- Contacting contractors for bids on various projects.
- Supporting and advertising community lunch
- Marketing
- Gas cards
- Maintaining and opening of chapel.
- Newsletter
- Planning Holy Week and Easter
- Organizing Church World Service items
- Ordering kitchen & cleaning supplies
- Restocking Diaper bank

\*\*Please ministry chairs check your office mailbox\*\*


**Mission Statement**

**As one body in communion with God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, we, the members of United Community Church covenant with one another to care for and love each other as Jesus Christ loves us, and to maintain, support, and foster a compassionate ministry in our community and throughout all God's creation**

# YOUNG AND THE YOUNG AT HEART PAGE

Children's bulletins are available at our worship services as well as downloadable from the Constant Contact with the worship materials and on the website: [uccstj.com](http://uccstj.com).

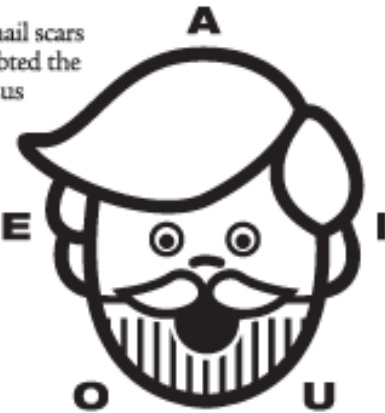
## PUZZLE



### SEEING AND BELIEVING

Until Thomas saw Jesus' nail scars with his own eyes, he doubted the resurrection. What did Jesus tell Thomas?

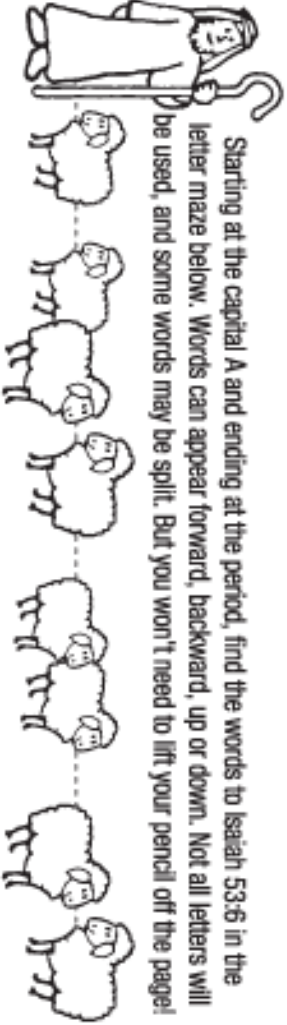
**Directions:**  
Use the code to fill in the vowels and complete  
*John 20:29, NIV.*



"B \_ c \_ \_ s \_ y \_ \_ h \_ v \_ s \_ \_ n m \_ ,  
y \_ \_ h \_ v \_ b \_ l \_ \_ v \_ d ;  
bl \_ ss \_ d \_ r \_ th \_ s \_ wh \_ h \_ v \_ n \_ t  
s \_ \_ n \_ nd y \_ t h \_ v \_ b \_ l \_ \_ v \_ d ."

**JOHN 20:29, NIV**

# Puzzle!




Starting at the capital A and ending at the period, find the words to Isaiah 53:6 in the letter maze below. Words can appear forward, backward, up or down. Not all letters will be used, and some words may be split. But you won't need to lift your pencil off the page!

Allwelikesbelievewraywecommandsodtherighteousnessof  
gospeltohsrevealstartestimonynsalordrtheiniquity  
rightasisepraisedwsiifoaputownwayaposaahumcornerfo  
heavenouerisagoneadogivscaruootgercorraidoireasonsus  
returncaphaventrustedeaallturnedrespossesthtruths.Ila

Answer: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Not seen and yet have believed." John 20:29, NIV

# Good News Flags



Use batik, a unique fabric-dyeing method, to create flags celebrating the good news of Christ's resurrection.

**What you need:**

- Colored chalk
- White linen fabric
- Washable gel glue
- Acrylic craft paint
- Textile medium
- Paintbrushes

**What you do:**

1. Cut fabric to the desired size and shape. Set it on a flat, protected surface. With chalk, lightly sketch an Easter design or message.
2. Completely cover the chalk lines with gel glue. Let dry.
3. Mix equal parts paint and textile medium. Paint the flag with that mixture, which makes paint permanent. Let dry.
4. Soak the dried fabric in warm water a few minutes. Then gently peel away the glue to reveal the unpainted areas. Lay flat to dry.
5. Hang the flags and celebrate!

## Church World Service Depot coming to United Community Church in early May

United Community Church is the northern Vermont/New Hampshire depot for the CWS kits. Churches in our area that have been creating kits throughout the year will be dropping the filled boxes off in early May. We have many items to be assembled into kits and clean-up buckets. Below are the lists of items in each kit. Items can be dropped off at the church during business hours (9 am - 2pm Tuesday through Friday) or call and arrange for another time if the office hours don't fit with your time. Monetary donations are always accepted.

### Emergency Clean-up Bucket

- One 5 gallon bucket with resealable lid—
- One 4-8 oz pump spray air freshener
- Four scouring pads
- Seven sponges, assorted sizes, including one large
- One scrub brush
- Eighteen cleaning towels (reusable, like Easy Wipes ®)
- One 50-oz. or two 25 oz bottle(s) of liquid laundry detergent
- One 12—16 oz. bottle of liquid concentrated household cleaner that can be mixed with water (like Lysol ®)
- One 16-28 oz. bottle liquid disinfectant dish soap (like Dawn ®)
- One package of 48-50 clothes pins
- Clothesline, two 50 ft. or one 100 ft.
- Five dust masks
- Two pairs of non-surgical, non-latex gloves
- One pair work gloves (cotton with leather palm or all leather)
- 24-28 heavy duty or contractor type 30-45 gallon trash bags (remove roll from box)
- One 6-9 oz. bottle of non-aerosol insect repellent (drops or lotion)

Please purchase all liquids in plastic bottles. Be sure to send all new, unopened materials.

### Health Kit—

- One hand towel (approx.15" X 28" to 16"X32")
- One washcloth
- One wide-tooth comb (removed packaging)
- One fingernail or toenail clipper (removed packaging)
- One bath size bar of soap (in original packaging)
- One toothbrush (in original packaging)
- Ten standard size Band-Aids

Seal all items in a 1-gal. zipper closing plastic bag

### School Kit

- One pair of blunt scissors
- 3 70-count spiral or tape-bound pads of 8-1/2" X 11" ruled paper or pads with 200 – 210 sheets of paper
- One 30-centimeter ruler (12")
- One hand-held pencil sharpener
- Six new pencils with erasers
- One large eraser, 2-1/2"
- One box of 24 crayons

One 12" X 14" to 14" X 17" finished size cotton cloth bag with cloth handles Pack these items in the cloth bag and secure contents with the closure.



**APRIL BIRTHDAYS**

- 4/1 Steve Russell
- 4/4 John Colgrove
- 4/6 Brynn Evans
- 4/7 Carl Edwards
- 4/10 Cindy McCulloch
- Christina Potter
- 4/13 Michelle Decker
- 4/14 Anne Amos
- Bill Vinton
- 4/15 Gary Roberts
- 4/17 Scott Beck
- Peter Crosby
- 4/19 Bertie Koelewijn
- 4/22 Paige Crosby
- 4/26 Dennis Goodhue
- 4/27 Arlene Morse
- 4/28 Edna Carpenter



**APRIL ANNIVERSARIES**

- 6 Deborah & Gary Thornton
- 24 Christina & Bob Potter

**Chowder Supper**



**After Church  
Choir Rehearsals  
April 2 & 16**

**In our Thoughts and Prayers**

Julie Brisson

Bob Chapman

Mary Feron

Dennis Goodhue

Joan Knutsen

Ed Magnus



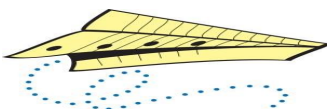
Kim O'Connor

George Rowell *(Elizabeth's Dad)*

Lorraine Scherer

Pam Smart

Vinton family



If we have missed your birthday or anniversary **please** let either Barbara or Erika know at 802-748-2603 or [UnitedCommunityChurchUCC@gmail.com](mailto:UnitedCommunityChurchUCC@gmail.com)

# United Community Church

United Church of Christ  
1325 Main Street  
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819



## Just a reminder:

Although we don't require mask wearing we ask you respect one another's choices to stay safe



## SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES 10am

In-person and  
Facebook Live /Zoom

Zoom etiquette:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=saved&v=209599687060439>

## STAFF

<i>Pastor</i>	Rev. Andrew Ponder-Williams
<i>Music Director /Organist</i>	Barbara Connelly
<i>Handbell Director</i>	Phil Brown
<i>Virtual Worship Director</i>	Phil Brown
<i>Virtual Technicians</i>	Sean Cavanaugh, Betty Keller
<i>Secretaries</i>	Barbara Connelly, Erika Thompson
<i>Building Manager</i>	Paul Bergeron

## CONTACT INFORMATION

United Community Phone number 748-2603  
Email UnitedCommunityChurchUCC@gmail.com

## April Lectionary



### April 2

Isaiah 50:4-9a  
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Philippians 2:5-11  
Matthew 21:1-11



### April 9

Acts 10:34-43  
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24  
Colossians 3:1-4  
John 20:1-18



### April 16

Acts 2:14a, 22-32  
Psalm 16  
1 Peter 1:3-9  
John 20:19-31



### April 23

Acts 2:14a, 36-41  
Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19  
1 Peter 1:17-23  
Luke 24:13-35



### April 30

Acts 2:42-47  
Psalm 23  
1 Peter 2:19-25  
John 10:1-10

