

UNITED COMMUNITY CURRENT



APRIL 2024

Email: Unitedcommunitychurchucc@gmail.com

Website: UnitedCommunity.church



Annual Meeting – May 12:

MODERATOR

As we approach Annual Meeting and prepare a budget for the next fiscal year, it makes sense to take stock, re-evaluate and adjust or renew our commitments. Your Stewardship Ministry and Church Council are committed to reviewing all of our abundant resources and working to make sure we are using our resources most effectively to address our ministry priorities.

One of the blessings/resources of United Community Church is the generous giving of our congregation members and friends. We hope that as we prepare for a new year of ministry that each member and friend of the church will review and re-evaluate their giving and consider making appropriate adjustments in their giving plan. Here are some areas you may wish to consider:



Inflation – While inflation has slowed dramatically in the past year, costs for our church’s ministry continue to rise. Hopefully most of us received some Cost-of-Living adjustment over the past year. Did you receive a 3% or 5% raise during 2023? If so, increasing your giving by a similar percentage (example: \$20 to \$21/week) should not have a major impact on your quality of life. Those of us receiving Social Security saw a 3.0% increase in our benefits starting in February.

Pastoral Search – Our Search Committee relies heavily on the movement of the Holy Spirit as they seek to discern the needs of the congregation and call a new settled Pastor. The process of extending, and hopefully accepting, a Pastoral Call is a deeply prayerful and spiritual journey for both the church and the pastoral candidate. In addition, there are real world considerations that candidates and their families need to factor into their own discernment process. The generosity of a congregation is significant measure of a church’s ability to call and retain a settled pastor.

Your Total Charitable Giving – How much do you contribute each year to Catamount Arts, Vermont Public, NVRH, American Red Cross, Vermont Food Bank, etc., etc. These, and so many other worthy organizations deserve our support. Nevertheless, I believe that my church should receive the largest, or even the majority, share of my charitable giving. United Community Church feeds the hungry, supports the arts, and promotes healing and education right here in our community and through the UCC, across the nation and the world.

Your Legacy – We know that all adults, regardless of age or the size of their estate, should have a will. The whole point of estate planning and writing a will is to provide some support for the family and institutions that we hope will continue after we have passed from this life. Hundreds of parishioners and friends of our predecessor congregations included the churches in their estate planning which has provided the endowment that supports many of our current ministries. This tradition of legacy giving has continued to bless United Community Church and we hope it will continue into the future as each generation passes on the cloak of ministry.

Your neighbors – Not everyone will be in a position to increase their giving, and some may not be able to give at all. Each of us, as a follower of Christ, needs to consider whether a “fair share” of our blessings could include giving on behalf of our less fortunate members and friends.

As we move forward together and prepare for ministry in our next fiscal year, I encourage all of us to prayerfully consider how we can appropriately contribute to the life and ministry of United Community Church.

Blessings for our ministries together,
Phil Brown, moderator

Ministry Reports

Worship & Care

Lent began in February with Shrove Tuesday and completed with an early Easter on March 31st. It has been a busy season. Throughout February and March we met each Friday afternoon for a Bible Study of the seven deadly sins which created some interesting discussion led by Jay Sprout and Steve Winkler.

We welcomed a new member to our congregation this month. And then we arrived at Holy Week.

Palm Sunday was March 24th. It was a joyous celebration complete with a palm parade that had the choir leading the youth of the congregation (and many, even most, of the congregation joining in) in a parade around the sanctuary. The kids paraded off to Sunday school while the rest of the participants paraded to their seats for the rest of the service.

A Maundy Thursday service observing the Last Supper was held in the evening of Thursday, March 28. The sanctuary was made ready with long tables set for up to 36 people. There was a light supper of breads, olives, dates and other foods that might have been present at the original supper. The service was interactive; those seated around the table read scriptures, sang songs, shared stories and were led in a meditative service by Jay and Steve. Barbara and Phil led the music. It was a powerful, moving service. If you missed it this year, we hope you can join us next year. It is becoming a tradition of our church.

The sanctuary was open for quiet meditation on Friday from 12 to 3. Bible Study was held on that Friday as usual at 1 pm with a service of communion held at 2:15 for all who wished to participate.

Easter Sunday started early with a "sunrise" service at 7:30 am. Due to uncertain weather it was held at the church. But even here we progressed from the cross in front of the church to the communion table in the sanctuary where we had a breaking of bread. A breakfast of coffee cakes, fruits and egg casseroles was held in the dining room following the service. Easter service followed in its usual joyous manner that ended in a large group singing the Hallelujah Chorus! Perfect. A huge thank you to all who helped plan, prepare, set up, clean up, set up flowers, led us and came to be a part of it all! If you missed it, plan to join us next year. And as always, we need people to participate each Sunday at our usual service time. Thank you!!



Outreach

March was Mission Month. Each Sunday, a Moment for Mission was presented. Our first one was for the Church World Service "eggs."

Each egg had an item for one of the CWS kits. Many of them have been taken and we are receiving items to make 20 clean up buckets, 40 hygiene kits, and 30 school kits. If you haven't taken an egg, look them over and see what you can contribute. Assembly of the kits will be in April, stay tuned.

Looking ahead we have the men's group sponsoring a Chowder Supper the evening before the total eclipse. They have chowders planned and but do need pies for dessert. Pies can be brought to the church Sunday, April 7. If you would like to help with set up, clean up talk to Kris Norris. United Community is participating in the Maple Fest on April 20 with a pancake breakfast. We are also looking for help with set up, clean up and serving. This fund raiser will help with our matching funds for the masonry and repointing work.

Spiritual Formation & Nurture

We just completed a Lenten Bible study for the adults that met every Friday. The youth finished their own Lenten study "This is My Body" where we explored how Jesus lived in his body on earth. This study provided us with scripture, reflection, discussion, activity and prayer. In April we will finish our studies on the Beatitudes and start a 6 week deeper look at the Lord's Prayer.



Stewardship

The Stewardship committee completed the budget, and is also discussing some important decisions about endowment including the endowment restrictions and appropriate distribution of risk between the two different types of accounts that we have. We also have upcoming bids that will be due for our next grant and inspection of the stained glass windows.

Reach Out

We assisted persons with 2 packs of diapers, 1 hygiene kit, 1 assistance with laundry, and 1 COVID test. We are in need of gas cards. We are in need of easy foods that don't need heating up and are non-perishable for Ted and Frannie's. We have a young mom that we have been

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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

UCCSTJ.org

Unitedcommunity.church



Ministry reports *(continued from page 2)*

helping with a newborn (tiny 6 pounds) that is in need of baby stuff. We would also use donations small travel size clothing detergent.



Meal Site



Once again, thank you for your generosity, your caring, and your support. This month our In-house numbers have dropped a little, so instead of numbers in the 80's to 90's, we're serving about 20 less per meal. We have no idea why these kind of fluctuations happen, so we just go with the flow. The difficulty is not being able to predict how much food to prepare. But, our contribution to the Salvation Army is consistent, needed, and very much appreciated! That said, we could really use sandwich bread, tuna, creamed soups, and any kind of boxed dessert mixes. And, come for lunch! Even though we are not a fast-food establishment, our guests are served in pretty short order. Or consider volunteering. We can especially use help on Tuesdays and Thursdays for prep sessions. It's always quite a party!

Archives



I continue to sort through boxes that have been left in the archives room. We are slowly putting old North Church bulletins away. We have had a few new donations of pictures to be filed.

Beware of "spoofing"

At least one member of our congregation has received a fake email, purporting to be from our Moderator, Phil Brown. The email asked the congregant to purchase gift cards for "the staff". This email was not sent from Phil's email address, but from a made-up address pastor73628@gmail.com that someone created to look like it came from Phil.

It's unfortunate that someone would use information about our church community to try to scam members; however, we are an active congregation which means that people know about us. Please remember to always check the source of any unusual messages you receive. It's often advisable to reach out to the supposed "sender" using a known alternate contact method if you ever have a question about the validity of an email, text, or voice mail.



Welcome!

Linda Perkins transfers her membership to United Community Church.

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

Church Council Members



Phil Brown, Moderator	stjmusic@sover.net	Pam Dearborn, Member at Large	dpam2203@gmail.com
Alice Kitchel, Assistant Moderator	alicekitchel@gmail.com	Gail Warnaar, Member at Large	gailw@theoldhomestead.com
Elisa Rowell, Treasurer	elisamay1978@gmail.com	Karen Sayles, Worship & Care	kmsayles@yahoo.com
Helene Millas, Assistant Treasurer	frenchcutie289@yahoo.com	Kris Norris, Stewardship	KristanNorris312@gmail.com
Karen Sayles, Clerk	kmsayles@yahoo.com	Vicki Scherer Spiritual Formation & Nurture	vickyscherer@gmail.com
Kathy Brown, Assistant Clerk	kbpb@together.net	Alice Kitchel, Outreach	alicekitchel@gmail.com
Pam Dearborn, past Moderator,	dpam2203@gmail.com		

Offerings

	Mar	July-MarYTD)
Offering*	13,309.16	65,725.16
Other directed offerings	302.70	3,298.31
Roof Fund	0.00	1,366.99
Community meal	403.75	6,436.13
Total Offerings	2, 170.49	76,826.59

Wider Mission	246.00	1,051.73
Local Mission	25.00	985.00
Total Mission	271.00	2,036.73

* includes bequests

	Mission	Offering
2023/2024	\$4,780.00	\$70,000.00
% of budgeted amt	42.6%	109.8.0%

Holy Week Activities



L-R, top –bottom
Palm Sunday,
Maundy Thursday
dinner set up,
Maundy Thursday
meal, flowers being
arranged, Early
Easter in the
“tomb”, Easter Cel-
ebration anthem,
Hallelujah Chorus



Projects from staff:

- Sunday morning services slide show
- Support Pulpit Supply pastors
- Assist in gathering information for grant
- Assist in providing information Gail’s group
- Organized ladies’ tea
- Organize order list
- Assist with letting in contractors in the apartments
- Inventory of CWS
- Calendars
- Gathering information on the history of the warming center
- Support in Holy Week
- Support preparing for Eclipse
- Organize google drive
- Supporting people in addressing community supports
- Press releases and advertising church events.
- Assist with worship planning
- Addressing current issues with building use
- Support members of congregation
- Worship and care
- Lollipop Wednesday
- Gas cards
- Performed background checks
- Coordinate maintenance request
- Welcome bags
- Assist with organizing stewardship google drive
- Meet with some tenants about concerns
- Organized donated office supplies
- Thank you notes for memorial gifts

Pretzels for Lent



North Country Chorus presents Bernstein

North Country Chorus presents a concert of works by Leonard Bernstein Friday, April 26 at 7:30 pm and Saturday, April 27 at 3 pm. Concert will be held at South Church Hall, St. Johnsbury Academy. Entrance by donation. Performing with North Country Chorus will be Halcyon Chorale and North Country Youth Chorus. Bernstein's "Mass" will be performed. Bernstein composed his "MASS" at the request of Jacqueline Kennedy for the opening of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., in 1971. Bernstein wrote in the original Kennedy Center program, after some acknowledgments: "As to any further program-note of an analytical nature, I hope that none is necessary, since the intention of Mass is to communicate as directly and universally as I can a reaffirmation of faith." Also included in the program will be selections from Bernstein's musical "West Side Story" and his operetta "Candide."



to our community.

To the United Community Church,

We at Ignite Change want to thank you immensely for you having us in your space. We just graduated our first participant last Thursday the 7th and our 2nd participant tonight. With your support we have been able to bring more safety and connection

In partnership and deep gratitude,

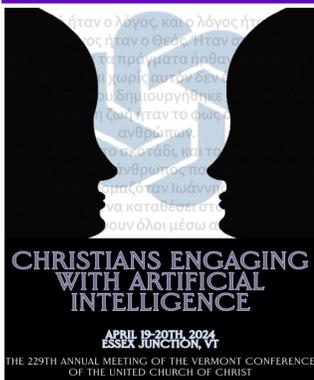
The Ignite Change Program and Umbrella Staff

Hello—Our family is reaching out to churches and organizations that have been part of our life in New England. Please us it locally in St. J. I grew up in the church—baptized and active while I lived in VT. We were married there August 10, 1958. The windows on the Church St. side were boarded up—the bride complained—Rev. Hannum and my uncle Roy Skinner, the building sexton, told me if it was a nice day, they'd be removed. The beautiful stained glass windows were being repaired. They did—sun and breeze were wonderful. My father died when I was eleven. My mother had to work long hours at Randall Witcombe & St. J. Academy Main office. Rev. Hannum & wife, Anna, were so good to me. Felt like they were an another Aunt and Uncle. Thank you.

Marilyn Skinner Gillingham

Maple Fest at United Community

United Community Church is participating in the St. Johnsbury Maple Fest. A Pancake Breakfast will be at the church on Saturday, April 20 from 8:30—11 am. Outreach Ministry is coordinating this event and is looking for volunteers to help with set up, cooking, serving and clean up. If you can give a little time, please contact Alice Kitchel at alicekitchel@gmail.com The proceeds from this breakfast will go towards our matching grant for the repointing and masonry work on our wonderful building.



The Vermont Conference's 229th Annual Meeting titled 'Christians Engaging with Artificial Intelligence' will be held April 19 and 20 in Essex Junction. Church World Service Menstrual Hygiene kits are being collected by the conference. If you wish to donate towards these kits, the following items are needed. Two 2-oz bottles hand sanitizer, three 4-gallon bathroom trash bags, one travel pack of Wet Ones, ten unscented tampons (5 regular, 5 super), ten unscented sanitary napkins (long, super ultra-thin), one bath-size bar of soap in original package (3 oz or larger, no Ivory or Jergens), one pack of flushable wipes (unscented, 42–48 count), and six laundry sheets (placed in a small Ziploc bag). Drop them off at the office.

APRIL Birthdays

- 4/1 Steve Russell
- 4/4 John Colgrove
- 4/5 Elizabeth Rowell
- 4/6 Brynn Evans
- 4/7 Carl Edwards
- 4/10 Cindy McCullock
Christina Potter
- 4/12 Gretchen Steen
- 4/13 Michelle Decker
- 4/14 Anne Amos
Bill Vinton
- 4/15 Gary Roberts
Newcomb Greenleaf
- 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
- 4/29 Natalie Chapman

APRIL Anniversaries

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



CHOIR REHEARSALS

9 AM SUNDAYS

11:30 AM—12:30 PM

APRIL 7

APRIL 21

SUNDAY SCHOOL PRE K—6TH GRADE

EVERY SUNDAY DURING LENT

APRIL 14

APRIL 28

In Christian Sympathy

Kathryn A Piper

August 30, 1951—March 6, 2024
Celebration of Life on May 11 at 1 pm

Robert B. Tobin

Bill Tobin's brother
September 1, 1966—March 26, 2024



UNITED COMMUNITY HANDBELL ENSEMBLE

REHEARSALS

6—7:30 PM WEDNESDAYS



Congratulations!

Joseph Haines represented
Lyndon Institute at the New
England Music Festival,
March 23 in Boxborough, MA

In our Thoughts and Prayers

Bob Chapman

Mary Feron

Joan Knutsen

David Martin

Piper family

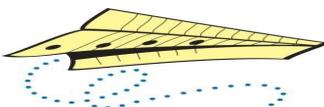


Vicki Scherer (*travel with school
group*)

Tobin family

Wold family

Wood family



If we have missed your birthday or anniversary **please** let either Barbara or Erika know at 802-748-2603 or 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

Music Director /Organist Barbara Connelly
Handbell Director Phil Brown
Technical Director Phil Brown
Worship Technicians Sean Cavanaugh, Betty Keller
Secretaries Barbara Connelly, Erika Thompson

CONTACT INFORMATION

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



April



Lectionary Texts

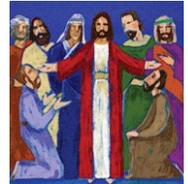
April 7

Acts 4:32-35
Psalm 133
1 John 1:1- 2:2
John 20:19-31



April 14

Acts 3:12-19
Psalm 4
1 John 3:1-7
Luke 24:36b - 48



April 21

Acts 4:5-12
Psalm 23
1 John 3:16-24
John 10:11-18



April 28

Acts 8:26-40
Psalm 22:25-31
1 John 4:7-21
John 15:1-8

