

UNITED COMMUNITY CURRENT



MARCH 2024

Email: Unitedcommunitychurchucc@gmail.com

Website: UnitedCommunity.church



Assistant Moderator needed

MODERATOR



Your nominating committee is working hard to identify and recruit members of the congregation to serve in leadership and ministry roles for the next few years. Among the leadership positions available is the Assistant Moderator. According to our By-laws: *Assistant Moderator shall . . . serve in the absence of the Moderator and otherwise assist the Moderator as needed.* The Assistant Moderator generally attends Council meetings as an ex-officio (voice-without-vote) member. S/he can simultaneously serve in another Ministry or At-large capacity. The expectation is that the Assistant Moderator will accept the nomination for the Moderator position when the current Moderator completes his/her term; therefore, the most important job for the Assistant Moderator is to learn how the church and Council operate and to develop a working understanding of the processes and challenges facing the staff and congregation.



A few years ago, when Pam Dearborn was suddenly thrust into the Church Moderator position, we, as a church, did two things to support her in that role. First, we decided in Annual Meeting to ask the Past Moderator to continue on the Church Council as an ex-officio member. This was done to provide peer support for the current Moderator while also providing the Council with the “institutional memory” gained during the Past Moderator’s years of service. At that time, Alice Kitchel graciously agreed to honor that request and serve on the Council as Past Moderator. Following her term as Moderator, Pam Dearborn has continued to serve as Past Moderator while simultaneously serving as a Member at Large.

Secondly, there was a need to fill the open Assistant Moderator position. After much prayerful consideration I let the Council know that I would accept an appointment as Assistant Moderator. The Council approved that interim appointment which was subsequently affirmed by the congregation at the next Annual meeting. As Moderator, Past Moderator and Assistant Moderator, Pam and Alice and I developed a “team” approach to leading and addressing day-to-day issues that arose between Council and Congregational meetings. Together we worked to lead the church through a pandemic shut-down, a pastoral departure, an interim ministry, and a pastoral search and call.

In May 2022 when Pam completed her term as Moderator and I accepted the nomination to become Moderator, many of us still felt like we were in “recovery” mode from the pandemic, et al. As a result the Nominating committee was not able to identify a member to accept the nomination as Assistant Moderator. Alice graciously stepped into the Assistant Moderator role as a “place keeper”, while also leading our Outreach Ministry. And so, for the past two years we have continued with the same Moderator “team”, albeit with each of us holding different offices.

I am now approaching the final year of my term as Church Moderator. In May 2025 I plan to transition to the Past Moderator role and to serve as support for a new Moderator, whoever that may be. It’s important that whoever we select as Moderator next year should have experience and a working knowledge of the issues and processes that the Council deals with every month. The best way to gain that knowledge is to serve as Assistant Moderator, attend Council meetings and work with the Moderator “team”. Hopefully, by next May, we will have called a new Pastor and the new Moderator and Pastor will be able to work together to lead the church into an exciting future. When the Nominating committee asks you if you would consider serving the church as Assistant Moderator, please give that invitation serious and prayerful consideration. I would be happy to meet with any member who would like additional information about serving as Assistant Moderator or in any leadership capacity.



Blessings for our ministries together,
Phil Brown, moderator

Ministry Reports

Worship & Care

Easter comes early this year! Worship and Care is working with our 'interim to interim' ministers, Steve Winkler and Jay Sprout, to make Lent a special and meaningful time at UCC.

Lent began on February 14 with a special service that opened with the Bell Choir and continued with scripture readings, singing songs in the Taize style and times of reflection. Lenten Bible Study, centered on the seven deadly sins, are held on Fridays at 1pm. All are welcome to join and you can join on any Friday in March, no prior experience needed. Steve Winkler and Jay Sprout are leading us in this study.

Holy Week begins on March 24 with Palm Sunday. A Maundy Thursday service will be held in the evening of March 28, please watch for more details. The sanctuary will be open for quiet meditation on Good Friday from 12 to 3. Bible Study will be held on that Friday as usual at 1 pm with a service of communion held at 2:15 for all who would like to participate.

Easter Sunday begins with a "sunrise" service at 7:30 am, place to be determined by weather. Breakfast will follow in the church dining room at 8:30 am and Easter services in the sanctuary at 10am. Please join us!

As we move through Lent we are looking for people who would like participate in worship. Please contact either the church office or Karen Sayles if you would like to be a participant. We do try to plan ahead so let us know if you have a date or activity in mind.

A BIG thank you to all our regular volunteers! You are so appreciated!

Outreach



Where did February go? The Desert and Dancing event was a fun time for all who attended. We thank everyone who helped with decorations, set up, serving, clean up and especially Swing North Big Band. We were able to raise funds for the indoor griddle and also give Swing North a contribution. Looking ahead we have a relatively quiet March as we prepare for Easter. During March, we will have our Easter Egg tree up. On the tree will be cut out Easter Eggs labelled with items for the Church World



Service kits. We are planning on making at least 30 school kits, 40 hygiene kits, and 20 clean-up buckets. See page ## for the list of items in each kit. We do have some items already but will need more to make our goal. We especially need School kit bags. If you are a person who likes to sew, we can get you the simple directions on how to put together the school kit bags. March is also the month when we collect for the special offering One Great Hour of Sharing. See page ## for more information.

Spiritual Formation & Nurture

Spiritual formation ministry and Sunday School teachers will be completing a training on mandated reporting for APS and DCF. This is a yearly requirement of our Safe Church Policy.

We started our Lenten Sunday School curriculum. During Lent we will be meeting every Sunday for Sunday School. Nancy Reynolds will be sharing with the students pretzel making and then we'll share them during fellowship time on March 17. There is also an adult Bible study on Fridays at 1 pm. Friday Bible study is based on discussion of the seven deadly sins. The second Sunday of every month the Spiritual Formation Ministry will meet after church. All are welcome at these meetings to hear about what we are doing and find out how to be involved. March's meeting will be March 10th at 11:30.



Stewardship



Stewardship Ministry has spent most of its time preparing a budget for FY2025. There are many people to contact and get information about the activities of our church. We continue to oversee the apartments. Bourne's Energy has installed oil tank monitors in all of the tanks. This will prevent freezing due to low temperatures in the buildings. We continue to work on upgrading our security system for the church and surrounding areas. Betty continues to communicate with the Historical Preservation Trust, finding information they require on our masonry repair grant.



Reach Out

We assisted persons with 12 gas cards, 1 pack of diapers, 2 hygiene kits, and 2 COVID tests. We also assisted 2 persons with warm

(continued on page 3)



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)*

socks, gloves, and hats and provided first aid supplies to them. Aid was given to 1 person as they filled out an apartment application and we referred 1 person to HOPE in Lyndonville for clothing. Presently we are out of gas cards. We still need of easy foods that are non-perishable for Ted and Frannie's Cabinet.

Meal Site

Greetings from the kitchen crew, I want to thank you all again for your support... especially the carrots! We now have a nice stockpile of frozen carrots for soups, casseroles, and more. What a wonderful gift! We also appreciate your weekly donations of juices, creamed soups, tuna, and canned veggies (or fruit). Our number of guests is increasing with every meal. We are now running between 80 to 90 in-house meals on both Wednesdays and Fridays. Then we supply meals to the homeless through the Salvation Army, and those numbers have also increased. We do what we can, and it's often quite a challenge, but our total number of meals is often well above 150 for each day. We use everything you are able to donate. FYI: Thursdays are "Cookie Day" at Frei-hoffers. If you buys 2 boxes of cookies, all of the bread, rolls, and bagels are \$.79 each. What a deal. If you're looking for something new to donate, we can always use bread, cookies, granola bars, desserts, and fresh fruit. Thank you once again for everything!



Archives



The Historical Preservation Trust Grant has asked for much information that is in the Archives. I have been helping Betty find old blueprints and information on the masonry work of our church.

Easter Flower order forms coming

With Easter at the end of March, our florist hasn't sent us the order form for Easter flowers. It is being put together as this newsletter comes out. If you are one of the many who purchases Easter flowers to decorate our sanctuary, please keep your eyes out for the constant contact that will have the order form in it. In the past we have had the traditional Easter Lilies plus Asiatic Lily, Oriental Lily, Hydrangea, Azalea, Hyacinth, Daffodils, Crocus, and Tulips. Flowers can be purchased in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone special.



Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee has been appointed by the church council. Karen Sayles, Kathy Brown, and Erika Thompson volunteered for this committee. They will be approaching members to prayerfully consider serving on one of the Ministries (Worship & Care, Outreach, Stewardship, Spiritual Formation and Nurture) or as an officer of the church. Listed below are those who currently serve on the Church Council. Many have done so for several years and it is important to have new "blood" in the leadership to keep United Community Church vital and current. What position can you help us with. Talk to one of the nominating committee members and offer your assistance.

Church Council Members



Phil Brown, Moderator
stjmusic@sover.net
Alice Kitchel, Assistant Moderator
alicekitchel@gmail.com

Pam Dearborn, Member at Large
dpam2203@gmail.com

Elisa Rowell, Treasurer
elisamay1978@gmail.com

Gail Warnaar, Member at Large
gailw@theoldhomestead.com

Helene Millas, Assistant Treasurer
frenchcutie289@yahoo.com

Karen Sayles, Worship & Care
kmsayles@yahoo.com

Karen Sayles, Clerk
kmsayles@yahoo.com

Kris Norris, Stewardship
KristanNorris312@gmail.com

Kathy Brown, Assistant Clerk
kbpb@together.net

Vicki Scherer Spiritual Formation & Nurture
vickyscherer@gmail.com

Pam Dearborn, past Moderator,
dpam2203@gmail.com

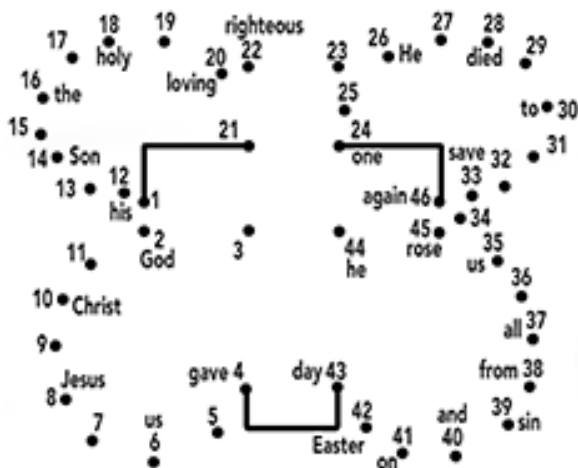
Alice Kitchel, Outreach
alicekitchel@gmail.com

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.

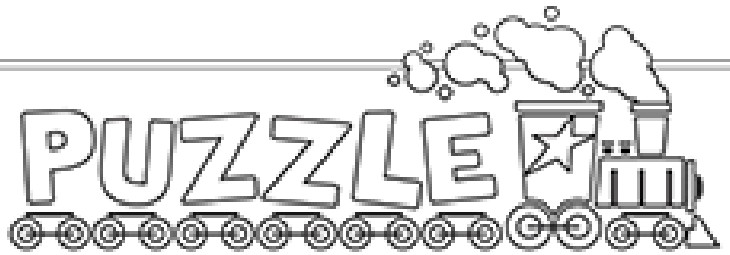
Puzzle!

Connect the dots to find two symbols of Easter. Then write the words in the correct blanks to complete an Easter poem.



2	4	6	8	10	12	14
16	18	20	22	24		
26	28	30	33	35	37	38
40	41	42	43	44	45	46

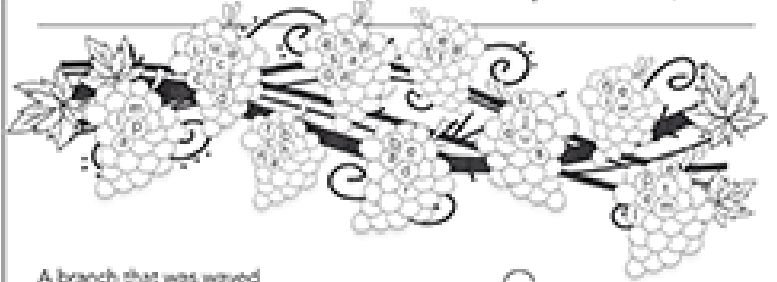
Answer: God gave us Jesus Christ, his Son, the holy, loving, righteous one. He died to save us all from sin, and on Easter day he rose again.



A LASTING LESSON

Before dying on the cross, Jesus teaches the disciples an important lesson.

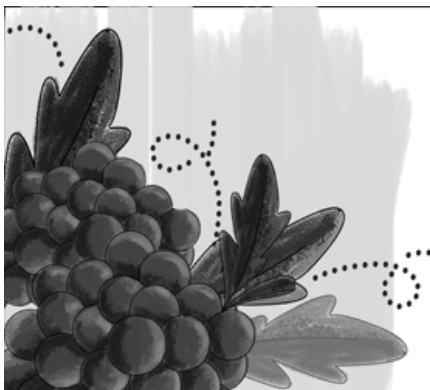
Directions: Use the clues to unscramble the letters in each grape cluster. Then write the circled letters in order below to complete John 15:5, NIV.



- A branch that was waved
- How Jesus was put to death
- A stick attached to the vine
- People shouted this to Jesus
- Jesus washed these
- This was broken and eaten
- The Messiah
- A drink from grapes
- Jesus drove the money changers from here

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear _____; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5, NIV

Answer: palm, crucifix, leaf, bread, baptism, wash, wine, branch, much fruit



- What you do:**
1. On a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, arrange grapes in a single layer. Freeze for two hours.
 2. Insert a toothpick into each grape.
 3. Dip each grape into the yogurt, coating half of it.
 4. Roll each dipped grape in the crushed crackers. Place back on the parchment.
 5. Freeze for two more hours. Enjoy!

- What you need:**
- 30 grapes, washed and dried
 - 1/2 cup vanilla yogurt
 - 4 graham crackers, crushed
 - Toothpicks
 - Parchment paper

Try this chilly new take on a healthy snack.

EXCEPTIONS
Grape

Offerings

	Feb	July-FebYTD)
Offering	1,484.16	51,280.21
Other directed offerings	300.00	2,995.61
Roof Fund	25.69	1,366.99
Community meal	360.64	5,982.38
Total Offerings	2, 170.49	61,625.19
Wider Mission	25.00	805.73
Local Mission	25.00	960.00
Total Mission	50.00	1,765.73

	Mission	Offering
2023/2024	\$4,780.00	\$70,000.00
% of budgeted amt	36.9%	88.0%

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
- Set up new printer
- Organized ladies' tea
- Organize order list
- Assist with letting in contractors in the apartments
- Inventory of CWS
- Calendars
- Support in wedding
- Support for funeral
- Meeting with person doing a study on Warming center
- Support in Ash Wednesday
- Support Mardi Gras dance
- 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
- Ordering supplies for meal site
- Chocolate Wednesday
- Gas cards
- Performed background checks
- Coordinate maintenance request
- Welcome bags

One Great Hour of Sharing



One Great Hour of Sharing® is **one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ.** It supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries and both international and domestic disaster response. Each year, the Offering is gathered by several denominations and Church World Service under a single theme developed by the ecumenical OGHS Committee.

On Easter Sunday in 1949, on nation-wide radio, Christians were challenged to donate one million dollars in one hour to help people devastated by the aftermath of World War II. Faithful Christians answered the challenge and the goal was met. That was the beginning of the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering. This year marks the 75th Anniversary of its inception. Our world has changed since 1949, but human needs remain. OGHS continues to carry God's message of love and hope to people in crisis.

Donations can be made by using the offering envelopes in the pews, writing a check to United Community Church and put OGHS in the memo or using our donate button on our website (specify OGHS).

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 World Service Easter Eggs

On our “Christmas Tree” we have placed Easter Eggs labelled with items for the Church World Service kits. We ask you to take a couple, purchase the items and bring them to church. We will then assemble them into the appropriate kits in April. I send a picture of the items to family members telling them, this is what they received for Easter and will be helping others in need. 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.

Pot-luck lunch to hear about the coming St. Johnsbury Food Co-op

On Sunday, March 3, as the Universalist Unitarian Congregation of St. Johnsbury is hosting an ecumenical pot-luck lunch and panel discussion on how the proposed development of a new Food Co-op in St. Johnsbury dovetails with religious values. The panel discussion will be led by Jay Craven, a founding Board member of the St. Johnsbury Coop, which now counts some of us and hundreds of other neighbors among its members.

This event is a follow-up to the New Year's Eve interfaith service we held at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. We hope this second gathering will create even broader interest in interfaith partnerships and long-range benefits for our entire region.

Social Groups Meet for Fun and Conversation

The Men's Breakfast continues to meet on the first Saturday of the month at 8:30 am. This time for conversation and fellowship is enjoyed by all who identify as male. They have been looking into possible ways to expand their interests by helping out others in our community. They will be hosting a chowder supper on April 7. This supper will be open to all especially all the visitors that will be in St. Johnsbury for the April 8 total eclipse.



On the fourth Wednesday of the month at 1 pm, there is a "tea" for all who identify as female. This group has enjoyed sharing conversation and fellowship. Meaningful events were shared this past "tea" and we

learned new things about our friends both long time and new. The woman's group has agreed to provide pies or desserts for the Chowder supper. They have been brainstorming about changing the time for their "tea" so the women who work during the day can also attend.



If you wish to attend either of these social groups but because of work you can't, you can contact the office and we will put you touch with organizers so that maybe another time you can attend.



To the United Community Church,

The music made Mother's service very special. Mother's church was always very special to her. Thank you.

Sandy, Betsy, Ken

Photo on the right is the Sunday following Sunny Wood's funeral where the choir and a few "ringers" reprised the anthem (Come to the Water) sung at Sunny's service. Thanks to all who made this a wonderful celebration.



Mardi Gras Enjoyed by all



Holy Week Schedule:

Palm Sunday, March 24

10 am Palm Procession & Worship

Maundy Thursday, March 28

**6 pm Worship & Fellowship
(reservations preferred)**

Good Friday, March 29

**12 pm – 3 pm Sanctuary open for
meditation & prayer**

1 pm Bible Study (parlor)

2:15 pm Communion in sanctuary

Easter Sunday, March 31

**7:30 am Service at Mt Pleasant
Cemetery (weather permitting)**

8:30 am Easter Breakfast

9 am Choir Rehearsal

10 am Easter Celebration Worship

MARCH Birthdays

- 3/3 Andrew McCulloch
Dale Morse
- 3/5 Gehrig Beck
- 3/6 Jonathan R. Potter
- 3/7 Marcus Jacobus
- 3/13 Robin Burnash
- 3/15 Andrew Benoit
- 3/17 Virginia Cremer
- 3/22 Lance Abella
- 3/23 Peter Schweigert
- 3/25 Jo Braman
- 3/29 Connor Decker
- 3/30 Kathy Creaser
- 3/31 Dale Steen



CHOIR REHEARSALS

9 AM SUNDAYS

11:30 AM—12:30 PM

MARCH 3

MARCH 17



UNITED COMMUNITY HANDBELL ENSEMBLE

REHEARSALS

6—7:30 PM WEDNESDAYS

SUNDAY SCHOOL PRE K—6TH GRADE

EVERY SUNDAY DURING LENT

STUDENTS LEAVE SANCTUARY FOR
CLASS FOLLOWING THE ANTHEM



In our Thoughts and Prayers

Julie Brisson

Bob Chapman

Mary Feron

Joan Knutsen

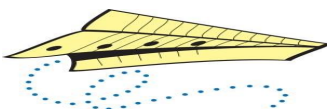


David Martin

Pam Parker

Kate Piper & 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



March 10

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

March



Lectionary Texts

March 3

Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1:18-25
John 2:13-22



March 10

Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10
John 3:14-21



March 17

Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm 51:1-12
Hebrews 5:5-10
John 12:20-33



March 24

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Mark 11:1-11
John 12:12-16



March 31

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
John 20:1-18

