

UNITED COMMUNITY CURRENT



OCTOBER 2023

Email: Unitedcommunitychurchucc@gmail.com

Website: UnitedCommunity.church



I know I have not arrived; but there's one thing I am doing: I'm leaving my old life behind, putting everything on the line for this mission. I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 3:13-14

How is your Church Council “pressing on toward the goal”? On September 11 immediately after accepting the resignation of Rev. Andrew Ponder Williams, the Council met with Rev. Paul Sangree, Associate Conference Minister, to begin planning a path forward. We approved a Council letter to accompany Rev. Ponder Williams’ Letter to the Congregation. We appointed a sub-committee to review and update the Interim Profile Letter from 2020 and we planned for a Council-led service of worship for Sunday, September 17. The Council letter, along with Pastor Andrew’s letter, was mailed to the Congregation on September 12 and emailed to the Constant Contact list on Friday, September 15.

Pastor Andrew’s impending departure was announced publicly during worship on September 17 in Moderator, Phil Brown’s message. In his message Phil began the process of addressing the difficult emotions that arise during times of transition. <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/lpjsatqntv1wdcgw41qt/2023-09-17-Message-Phil-Brown.mp4?rlkey=yd6vpyv903k3h2slplub6kp5z&dl=0>. A service of Godspeed, led by Assistant Moderator, Alice Kitchel, was held at the end of worship on September 24 to mark the end of Pastor Andrew’s ministry with us and to signify the release of the covenantal vows made by congregation and pastor during the Call process. <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/bxy4wsye89yvx9obgja56/2023-09-24-Service-of-Godspeed-Rev.-Ponder-Williams.mp4?rlkey=wsy5gh5y3rw7luy3mtnaejz1z&dl=0>.

The sub-committee working on the Interim Profile Letter met and exchanged email several times during the last two weeks of September and presented a final draft of the letter to the Council on October 2. The Council made a few amendments to the Interim Profile Letter and approved the letter for submission to the Vermont Conference office during the meeting. <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/1pd7ciguolbd7aeylnswy/Profile-Letter-for-Interim-9-26-23.docx?rlkey=286s07a5d55r863w3kbqg9o68&dl=0>. This Profile was forwarded to the Conference office on Tuesday, October 3. The Conference will distribute this Profile to interested Interim candidates. It is the Council’s hope to interview candidates and Call an Interim Pastor by the 1st of the year.

For the immediate future we will need to contract for Pulpit Supply. The Council was presented with a proposal for an “Interim to the Interim” at our October 2 meeting. This proposal would have Rev. Steve Winkler (ret.) and Rev. Jay Sprout (ret.) cover a large portion of our pulpit supply needs until an Interim Pastor is Called. In addition, Jay and Steve are willing to provide pastoral care as needed and assist with an Advent Bible Study. The Council discussed this proposal at length and voted to accept this offer. Our hope is that this plan will provide some needed consistency and comfort during this time of transition.



We will have a time for Congregational Conversation following worship on Sunday, October 8. During this time we will answer questions, listen to the thoughts and feelings of the congregation and work together on a plan for the future. Our hope is that we can recruit and identify candidates for a Search Committee that can be approved at a Congregational Meeting in early November. Because the previous Search Committee completed a full Church Profile just 2 years ago, the new Search Team should be able to make the necessary revisions and submit the Profile to the Conference in early 2024.

Despite the challenges we face as a congregation, we continue to be an attractive church and community for pastoral candidates. I believe this church will be able to Call a new Settled Pastor within a year. One of the things that makes us attractive to pastoral candidates is our willingness and ability to work together to address challenges, create and manage events, and carry out our mission in the community. That willingness to work together as the Body of Christ will carry us through this transition and keep United Community Church vital and growing in ministry into the years ahead.

Blessings for our ministry together,

Phil Brown, moderator

MODERATOR



Ministry Reports

Worship & Care

Looking back to the September notes I can see there have been substantial changes since that writing. Entering October we will be having guest ministers each Sunday going forward for the next month(s).

Jay Sprout led our worship service on October 1st, World Communion Day. As we have done in the past, we presented communion bread choices from different cultures and countries around the world. And, since communion is traditionally a piece of bread with a small cup of juice, we brought all the various breads to our fellowship hour to allow us to sample all the choices put before us in worship. In addition, Beth Norris presented a wonderfully meaningful children's message focused on connecting our Neighbors in Need offering with world hunger. Each member of the congregation was given a bag lunch to sit and eat together at fellowship hour. Thank you, Beth for a powerful message!

In the coming weeks, our guest ministers will be:

- October 8: Steve Winkler
- October 15: Joan Vincent
- October 22: Jay Sprout
- October 29: Work Sunday after a short worship for which Phil Brown present the message

And, as always, there will be a need for participants for weekly worship – readers, greeters, acolytes. Please contact Karen Sayles, kmsayles@yahoo.com, if you want to volunteer (and don't be surprised to receive an email on occasion!) Thank you to everyone who makes worship meaningful!

Outreach



October is the month that we collect the special mission offering, Neighbors in Need. See page 5 for more information. This first weekend we will be putting on a Harvest Lunch of quiche, muffins, coleslaw, and apple crisp. If you can help, contact Alice Kitchel. We will be prepping on Friday. The lunch will be served between 11 am and 1 pm. Later in October we have our Haunted Sanctuary. October 31, Halloween will see many ghouls and goblins come through the sanctuary. Decorating will happen after



church on Sunday, October 29. Helpers are always needed as well as those who wish to dress up and join the fun in the sanctuary. Looking ahead, November brings us Thanksgiving and we will be asking for assistance with this community dinner.

Spiritual Formation & Nurture

We are starting Sunday School classes on October 8th, like last year we will meet during service on the second and fourth Sundays. We are using a curriculum on Matthew and the Beatitudes. This is a 12 week curriculum. The second Sunday of every month the Spiritual Formation Ministry will meet after church.



Stewardship



The Church's building has many ongoing needs to be addressed. Our grant writing group has been hard at work trying to acquire grants to help cover some of these costs. One of the largest items is the re-pointing and mortar repair of our large stone structure. Energy efficiency and our kitchen are other items that need attention. Special thanks to Betty Keller for her endless hours of work.

Garrett's property management has been very helpful to us in repairs and management of our apartments. They have automated methods of providing their services, arrive consistently to handle repairs and coordinate services to our tenants. The stewardship committee works closely with Garrett's to cover maintenance and expenses. The changeover of tenants, lingering repairs, and other large expenditures will likely keep us from realizing any profits during this fiscal year.

Stewardship work in recent months includes the basement floor, parsonage clean-up, and movement and organizing of archive records to a new location in the upstairs office. Any help with reorganizing of equipment and "stuff" would be helpful after Sunday services. Please see one of the members of the stewardship committee if you'd like to help.

Reach Out

September saw us assist with 4 gas cards, 7 requests for diapers and 2 homeless backpacks were given out. If you find mittens, gloves, hats, warm socks on sale consider getting us some to put in our homeless backpacks.



(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)*

Archives



It is slow going through the many boxes of South and North Church memorabilia. If you are looking for something specific I will try to help. Try not to move items from the box and/or room they are housed in presently. We have two very full rooms of items to catalogue. The archive email is: stjuccarchives@gmail.com

Meal Site



We continue to serve over 100 meals every Wednesday and Friday. ON top of that, we have a special crew that makes bag “lunches” to be taken down to the Salvation Army store where people can pick up a free meal while they last.

It’s amazing the number of people that come in for a meal. They have many different reasons they attend our community lunches. Among the reasons are food insecurity but also as important and for some more important the need to be a part of a community—to eat with others, converse and enjoy each other’s company. Do remember that we have a community meal and that includes YOU. Come enjoy a warm meal and if you feel like it, leave a donation.

We appreciate all the food donations that are left at the church in the sanctuary as well a monetary donations at the meal site. We have decided that the best food donations are tuna, creamed soups, canned veggie and fruits, and juices. You can leave them in the box or bring them downstairs when you Come join us!

Projects from staff:

- Sunday morning services slide show
- Starting a membership drive
- Assist with worship planning
- Addressing current issues with building use
- Moving archive room
- Organize third floor
- Support members of congregation
- Clean Parsonage , and offices
- Worship and care
- Order supplies for meal site
- Lollipop Wednesday has started back
- Organize calendars
- Support research for grant
- Planning for World Communion Sunday
- Extra mailings
- Harvest Lunch
- Gas cards
- Performed background checks
- Coordinate maintenance request

****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

Church Council Members



Phil Brown, Moderator
stjmusic@sover.net

Alice Kitchel, Assistant Moderator
alicekitchel@gmail.com

Elisa Rowell, Treasurer
elisamay1978@gmail.com

Helene Millas, Assistant Treasurer
frenchcutie289@yahoo.com

Karen Sayles, Clerk
kmsayles@yahoo.com

Kathy Brown, Assistant Clerk
kbp@together.net

Pam Dearborn, past Moderator,
pamelad@nchcvt.org

Pam Dearborn, Member at Large
pamelad@nchcvt.org

Gail Warnaar, Member at Large
gailw@theoldhomestead.com

Karen Sayles, Worship & Care
kmsayles@yahoo.com

Kris Norris, Stewardship
KristanNorris312@gmail.com

Vicki Scherer Spiritual Formation & Nurture
vickyscherer@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!

Use the clues to discover the names of some Old Testament prophets. Then unscramble the circled letters to describe what prophets are.

I was called to preach to the people of Nineveh but ran from God instead. (My book is #32 in the Bible.)



I spoke God's message when the temple was being built. (My book is #37.)



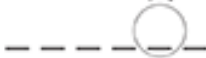
Israel's unfaithfulness to God is compared to my unfaithful wife. (My book is #28.)



My book predicts punishment for wickedness and promises comfort. (It is #23.)



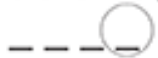
I had dreams and visions. (My book is #27.)



Because of my predictions, I was often in danger and angered officials. (My book is #24.)



I was a shepherd from Judah who called people to turn to God and leave their selfish lives. (My book is #30.)

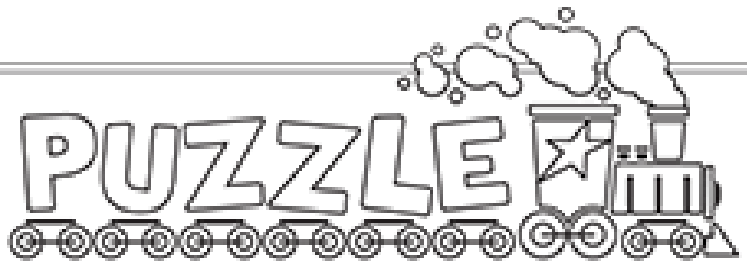


My book contains descriptions of strange visions. (It is #26.)



PROPHETS ARE _____

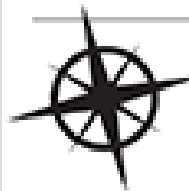
Answers: Jonah, Haggai, Hosea, Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, Amos, Ezekiel, Messengers



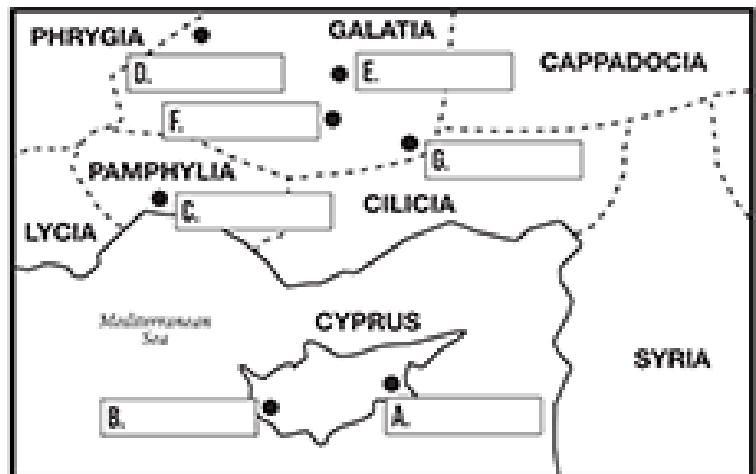
CITY SEARCH

God used Paul to spread the Gospel to many cities during his first missionary journey. Can you find them all?

Directions: From the fragments, guess each city and locate it on the map. Use the Bible references to help.



- | | | | |
|----|--------------|----|--------------|
| A. | (ACTS 13:5) | E. | (ACTS 13:51) |
| B. | (ACTS 13:6) | F. | (ACTS 14:6) |
| C. | (ACTS 13:13) | G. | (ACTS 14:6) |
| D. | (ACTS 13:14) | | |



Answers: Salamina, Paphos, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe

1. What you do: Gather leaves of different shapes and sizes. On a table, arrange them flat without overlaps. Set the paper over them.
2. Hold the crayon sideways and use the long edge to color over the leaves. You'll make an invisible rubbing of them.
3. Then paint over the paper with watercolors. The areas with crayon will resist the paint and reveal the hidden leaf designs.



What you need:

- Leaves
- White paper
- White crayon (label removed)
- Watercolor paints
- Water
- Paintbrush

Create some invisible art and then reveal the seasonal design.





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

- October 7** Fall for St. Johnsbury
Harvest Lunch (volunteers needed)
- October 8** Rev. Steve Winkler preaching
- October 15** Rev. Joan Vincent preaching
- October 22** Rev. Jay Sprout preaching
- October 29** after worship service
Decorate for Haunted Sanctuary
- October 31** Haunted Sanctuary

Offerings

	Sept	July-SeptYTD)
Offering	4,957.13	21,988.57
Other directed offerings	79.81	429.72
Roof Fund	25.69	1,289.92
Community meal	416.89	1,963.55
Total Offerings	5,479.52	25,671.76

Wider Mission	0.00	115.00
Local Mission	10.00	105.00
Total Mission	10.00	220.00

	Mission	Offering
2023	\$4,780.00	\$70,000.00
% of budgeted amt	4.6%	36.7%



October - "Neighbors in Need" month

In 2023, the Neighbors in Need "BEHOLD!" is continuing. This year's focus is on environmental justice. Plastics, electronics, and other non-compostable wastes are being shipped across, and even tossed into, our waterways, launched into space, as well as buried in landfills. As people of faith, we believe these egregious acts are sinful and unholy. We must be better stewards of our planet! There are many ways we as individuals can take better care of our environment. What are you doing to recycle, repurpose items that you do not want or need any more? How can you restrict your use of fossil fuels and transition to electrification? Have you thought of creating a pollinator garden?

One-third of this offering supports Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds are used by Justice and Witness Ministries to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations supporting a variety of environmental justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

Envelopes are in the pews during October. You can also donate via check— make it out to "United Community Church" and put NIN in the memo.



Good morning

Just to thank you so much for kindness when we met on August 24th 2023.

You make us sure that we were at the good church where Dr. Bob's mother were involved. Thanks as well to the sweet lady gardener who drove us to you.

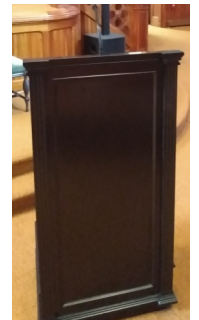


Réjean and Romain.
From Quebec, Canada

VOLUNTEER READERS NEEDED



There are a couple ways to be a reader these days...we had started having one reader for the service in response to a request from a member of the congregation but that isn't set in stone. If you like that idea,



and are willing to be a single reader, that's fine. But if you would like to read but want to share duties we can make that work. Also, you can read from the pulpit (and sit "up above" if you like) or read from the lectern down on the floor. Both ways will work. See Karen Sayles (802-274-0986 or kmsayles@yahoo.com) to volunteer for a Sunday. If reading scares you, we also need people to hand out bulletins and greet people as they come in. It's always welcoming to be greeted by a smiling face and a warm "Hello".

October has 5 Sundays

During the calendar year, there are several months that have 5 Sundays. Several years ago, it was suggested that on the fifth Sunday of the month, the congregation have a work Sunday. The work to be done would be helping someone with a project they can't do alone, or assisting in projects around the church that need extra help. Following a short worship service, we have participated in projects around the building and projects done away from the building. We are always looking for ideas. As of now since October has 5 Sundays, October 29 will be a "work" Sunday. One of the projects we will be doing that day will be to decorate the sanctuary in preparation for our "Haunted Sanctuary" October 31. We however are also looking for other projects either here at church or "away." If you have an idea, let the office know either by stopping in or email or a phone message. If you know of someone in the community that needs help doing something around or in their home that we can help with, let us know. October 29th gospel reading is about the two great commandments—let us show our Love of God by Loving our Neighbor as ourselves.



November 5—celebrate our Saints

November 11—Town Band Veterans Day concert

November 19—Organ Concert by Jim Farmer

November 23—Thanksgiving—Community Meal

November 26—Town Band Christmas Concert

December 3—First Sunday of Advent

United Community Church to host concerts

During the month of November, United Community Church will be hosting several concerts in our sanctuary. The traditional St. Johnsbury Town Band Veterans Day concert will be here on Saturday, November 11 at 6:30 pm. Patriotic music will be the order of the day with donation proceeds going to the St. Johnsbury History and Heritage Center.



On Sunday, November 19, our sanctuary will be the site of an organ concert. Jim Farmer will be performing a variety of organ music from the 16th century through to the twenty-first. Jim grew up in North Church and learned to play organ on our instrument. Following his retirement from being a federal prosecutor, he has returned to playing the organ and will be sharing his talent with us.

Sunday, November 26 the St. Johnsbury Town Band will again return to our sanctuary. This time they will be opening the Christmas season with their traditional Holiday Concert. Sharing the spotlight with them will be the Caledonia Children's Chorus. The Holiday Concert will begin at 3 pm and it is rumored that Santa may make an appearance.



Haunted Sanctuary October 31



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 10/1 Stan Moulton
- 10/3 Alice Kitchel
- 10/4 Nick Jacobus
- 10/4 Debbie Merchant
- 10/5 Victoria Scherer
- 10/8 Gary Thornton
- 10/8 Carrie Locklin
- 10/12 Jessica Sanville
- 10/12 Reagan Beck
- 10/14 Kaydence Repose
- 10/16 Trevor Leadbeater
- 10/19 Jamie Goodhue
- Logan Lane
- 10/21 Mary Lyons
- 10/24 Bob Amos
- 10/25 Ellis Turo



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 10/10 Alan and Stephanie Rowe
- 10/15 Kathy and Bob Creaser



CHOIR REHEARSALS

9 AM SUNDAYS

11:30 AM—12:30 PM

OCTOBER 1

OCTOBER 15



UNITED COMMUNITY

HANDBELL ENSEMBLE

REHEARSALS

6—7:30 PM WEDNESDAYS



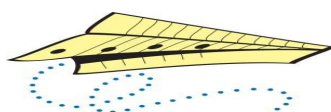
SUNDAY SCHOOL PRE K—6TH GRADE

2ND AND 4TH SUNDAYS

STUDENTS LEAVE SANCTUARY FOR CLASS FOLLOWING THE ANTHEM

In our Thoughts and Prayers

- Julie Brisson
- Bob Chapman
- Mary Feron
- Joan Knutsen
- Ed & Carew Magnus
- David Martin
- Sandy & Donna Murray
- Sayles 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](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=saved&v=209599687060439)

STAFF

Music Director /Organist	Barbara Connelly
Handbell Director	Phil Brown
Virtual Worship Director	Phil Brown
Virtual 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

October Lectionary



October 1

Exodus 17:1-7
Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
Philippians 2:1-13
Matthew 21:23-32



October 8

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20
Psalm 19
Philippians 3:4b-14
Matthew 21:33-46



October 15

Exodus 32:1-14
Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
Philippians 4:1-9
Matthew 22:1-14



October 22

Exodus 33:12-235
Psalm 99
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
Matthew 22:15-22



October 29

Deuteronomy 34:1-12
Psalm 90:1-6
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8
Matthew 22:34-46

