

THE STEEPLE

Williston Federated Church

An Open and Affirming, Reconciling Congregation

Pastor's Message

Dear members and friends of the church family,

The Season of Lent has begun. I know because a few days ago, on Ash Wednesday, we gathered in the sanctuary for a worship service to begin the season. And I also know because the students in our Sunday School (along with many adult volunteers - thank you!) celebrated "Pretzel Sunday" yesterday (Feb 21) - a time for us to remember the importance of prayer and one of the postures for prayer - think about a pretzel as arms folded across the chest - shoulder to shoulder.

I am writing this page on "Clean Monday." What is "Clean Monday?" It is the day that begins the season of Lent in Eastern Orthodox churches. It refers to a "clean start" - a season to have "clean hearts" and good intentions. For some who observe "Clean Monday" it is a day of fasting. For others, especially in modern Greece, it is celebrated with picnics, dancing, music, and good food!

Traditions vary widely. As we make our journey through these 40 days, we have opportunities for worship, study, fellowship and mission. I invite you to read through this edition of the *Steeple* for those opportunities, especially the newly-published adult study by the United Church of Christ, "Faithfully Facing Critical Issues and Decisions about End of Life Concerns" led by our Student Pastor, Paula Gile.

I also invite you to take a breath and take time for one of the Wednesday night worship opportunities.

Each Wednesday during Lent, you are invited to gather at 7 pm in the Sitting Room (across the hall from my office) for a brief service (about 30 minutes) for prayer, reflection, and silence. Those dates are: March 3, 10, 17 and 24.

A Maundy Thursday service will be held on April 1 at 7 pm in the Fellowship Hall. "Maundy" is derived from the Latin word "mandatum," meaning "commandment." It refers to Jesus' giving of the new commandment: "Love one another as I have loved you." The service includes the singing of hymns, prayer, and the reading of scripture as candles are extinguished. The readings and the extinguishing of a candle represent the fleeing of the disciples and the growing darkness in the hours in which the death of Christ drew near. We will also celebrate the Sacrament of Communion.

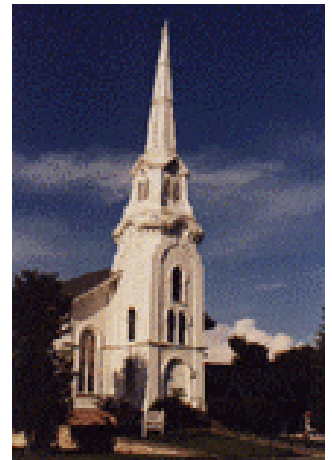
A Good Friday service is still in the planning stages. The time and place will be announced soon.

An Easter Sunrise service will be held at the home of Tony and Susan Lamb on Beebe Lane. The youth group will lead the service as we look over Lake Iroquois for the sun to rise over the mountains. A pot-luck breakfast follows.

Easter Sunday - worship at 9:30 am - sing "Alleluia", listen to the glorious singing of our choirs, and give thanks to the living God!

I'll see you at the "Clean Start" place!

Peace,
Pastor Joan



**March
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Church Office Hours:
Tues-Fri 8:30-3:30
Phone: 878-5792
E-mail: office@steeple.org

Sunday Worship
Service:
9:30 AM

Pastor:

Rev. Joan Newton O'Gorman

Local Pastor:

Rev. Charlie Magill

Student Pastor:

Paula Gile

Church Secretary:

Suzi Ange-Roland

Organist and Choir

Accompanist:

Carolyn Pillsbury

Music Director:

Martin Hain

Nursery Caregiver:

Michelle Davis

Thank You from Ginger Isham ~ A big thank you to all who contributed to Vermont Special Olympics in more ways than one and with confidence that this penguin could do the plunge! I made it in and out of the 33 degree lake water much to my own surprise. My team of 4 people raised \$1,305! Next year? Maybe?

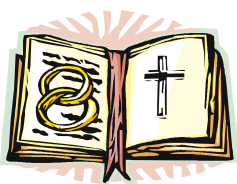
Whist Night ~ Due to popular demand, the Membership Committee will be hosting another Whist Night on Saturday, March 6th at 7pm. Please sign up on the bulletin Board and let us know if you have any children who will need childcare.

Mission Trip to Texas ~ FEMA is pushing for everyone in East Texas to be out of their trailers by Mid March. We are putting together a team to put finishing touches on homes so that families can move back in by then. Leave Sunday, March 7, back Saturday, March 13. Contact Tony Lamb 343-1544 or alamb@alamblaw.com for details.

Women of the Church Potluck & Book Discussion ~ Ellen Walker will be hosting us at her home at 192 Lamplite Lane on Tuesday March 16th. We will be discussing People of the Book by Geraldine Brooks.

Vision Priorities - Kitchen Improvements ~ As part of the Vision Priorities improvements to the Kitchen was listed. If you have input into the changes you would like to see to the Kitchen or you would like to get involved with this project, please contact Vickie Walker (497-0017)/ vwalker56@comcast.net or Polly Malik (879-6968)/ ptmalik@myfairpoint.net.

One Great Hour of Sharing ~ The OGHS appeal began in 1946 by an Episcopal Bishop whose goal was to raise money during a one hour service for their " World Relief " fund. Several other Christian denominations decided to join in this appeal to raise funds to strengthen the vitally important relief and rehabilitation work of their churches. The proceeds of this offering make real, the love of Christ, for those around the world who are suffering the effects of disaster, conflict and severe economic hardship. The funds generated will be allocated to both the UCC and the UMC for use in their outreach programs. The success of fundraising for all the churches involved in " One Great Hour of Sharing " proves to the world how great the power is that is generated when Christians unite for a common cause. The money given to UMCOR United Methodist Committee of Relief effectively focuses on emergency response to domestic and international disasters and they are presently very active in Haiti. Likewise the funds given to United Church of Christ through OGHS are used in response to disasters, ministry to Refugees and used to help build sustainable communities in more than 80 nations. This year March 14th has been designated as the day for the " One Great Hour of Sharing " fundraising appeal. Please give what you can. We realize and are grateful for the generosity of the people of the Williston Federated Church. Submitted by the Mission Committee.



LECTIONARY

Each Sunday we join Christians from many faith communities in hearing God's Word as selected from the *Revised Common Lectionary* ~ readings that over a period of 3 years take us through much of the Bible. Following are the Lectionary readings for this month ~ one or more are read aloud during the service.

March 7

Isaiah 55:1-9
Psalm 63:1-8
1 Corinthians 10:1-13
Luke 13:1-9

March 14

Joshua 5:9-12
Psalm 32
2 Corinthians 5:16-21
Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

March 21

Isaiah 43: 16-21
Psalm 126
Philippians 3:4b-14
John 12:1-8

March 28

Luke 19:28-40 (Palms)
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 (Palms)
Isaiah 50:4-9a (Passion)
Psalm 31:9-16 (Passion)
Philippians 2:5-11
Luke 22:14-23:56 or
Luke 23:1-49

Pancake Breakfast Results ~ Thank you to one and all who attended the pancake breakfast February 14! It was an overwhelming success!! We raised a whopping \$724!! for our mission trip to Nicaragua this July. Your generosity and support does not go unnoticed--many thanks!!

There are many Kids who need a Family like Yours ~ Casey Family Services is holding an orientation for families thinking about foster and adoptive parenting on March 6 & 13 from 9:30am to 4:30pm. RSVP is required. We believe that good parents come in all shapes and sizes. There are over 1,300 Vermont children in foster care. Many of these kids are looking for a family like yours. Whether you are interested in weekend-only or full-time parenting, come learn about what it takes to give a child the chance to succeed. We provide ongoing training, support, and financial assistance. Kids in our community need you now more than ever, so now is the time to learn more about becoming a foster or adoptive parent. RSVP by contacting Michelle Turbide at 655.6688 (ext 4715) or mturbide@caseyfamilyservices.org. Please visit us on the web at www.caseyfamilyservices.org.

All You Can Eat Italian Dinner ~ On March 20th at 5:30pm, there will be an All You Can Eat Italian Dinner at Williston Federated Church located at 44 North Williston Road, Williston, Vermont. Dinner includes ziti, meatballs, salad, bread and desserts. Featuring homemade sauce, meatballs, bread and desserts. You can eat-in or take out. \$8/adults, \$5/kids 5-12; kids under 5 eat FREE. Proceeds will support the Youth Nicaragua trip and Community Meals. If you can't attend consider buying a ticket and donating it, we will get the meal to a person in need. For reservations, please call 802-497-0017. If you have any questions contact Kathleen McKennan (KTMcCope@comcast.net), Polly Malik (ptmalik@my-fair-point.net) or Vickie Walker (Vwalker56@comcast.net).

Rummage Sale ~ Friday, April 9th from 9am to 6pm and Saturday, April 10th from 9am to 12pm. *Wanted:* Please bring in gently worn clothing for all ages, clean and in good condition, plus small household items including toys, books, linens, dishes, tools etc. Items may be brought to Fellowship Hall beginning on Monday, April 5th. Tables will be set up and labeled. If you have time, please take a moment to place your items on the appropriate tables. Please do not bring items until sale week. Helpers are also needed to with set up during the week, to work at the sale Friday & Saturday and to help take the left over items to either Goodwill, Salvation Army or Recycle North on Saturday. If you can help, please sign up on the bulletin board near the kitchen or call Carol Bouchard at 862-7400 or email: carolcbouchard@gmail.com.

NAMIWalks for the Mind of America ~ I am writing you today to tell you about an upcoming event that I am participating in that is both very important and very exciting to me. It is NAMIWalks for the Mind of America, NAMI's signature walkathon event that is being held in Montpelier, VT at State House Lawn on May 15, 2010. As you know, I have been active in NAMI VT for many years as a Family to Family volunteer educator and more recently as a member of the Walk Committee and its chair in 2008. One out of every four persons will experience a mental health issue in their life time. Several members of my immediate family have struggled with depression, severe anxiety disorders, autism and alcoholism. This year my team is called "Minds Matter." I would like to ask you to come and walk with me or to donate to support my participation in this great event. Visit my personal walker page to sign up: <http://www.nami.org/namiwalks10/VMT/saramoran>. It features a link to my team's page there where you can see who else is walking with me. There is also a link so you can donate directly to me online, which I would really appreciate. Donating online is fast and secure, and I'll get immediate notification via e-mail of your donation. NAMI, the Nation's Voice on Mental Illness, formerly the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, is the largest education, support and advocacy organization that serves the needs of all those whose lives are touched by these illnesses. This includes persons with mental illness, their families, friends, employers, the law enforcement community and policy makers. The NAMI organization is composed of approximately 1100 local affiliates, 50 state offices and a national office. The goals of the NAMIWalks program are: to fight the stigma that surrounds mental illness, to build awareness of the fact that the mental health system in this country needs to be improved and to raise funds for NAMI so that they can continue their mission. NAMI is a 501(c)3 charity and any donation you make to support my participation in this event is tax deductible. NAMI has been rated by Worth magazine as among the top 100 charities "most likely to save the world" and has been given an "A+" rating by The American Institute of Philanthropy for efficient and effective use of charitable dollars. NAMI has also been given 4 out of 4 stars by The Charity Navigator for short-term spending practices and long-term sustainability. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Sara Moran

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New Member Opportunities ~ The Membership Committee will be hosting an informational session on Sunday, March 7th, for those with an interest in joining the church. We will be meeting in the sanctuary, immediately following worship. Childcare is available. Please come if you'd like to learn more about membership, committees, and church affiliations, or if you have other questions about participating in the life of the church. Our next Reception of Members will be held on Sunday, March 14th. A social time will be held at the parsonage on Wednesday, March 10th at 6:30pm. If you have questions about the informational meeting or member reception, please speak with Joan O'Gorman (878-5792) or Cathy Michaels (879-6819).

Lenten Study Series

Sunday Feb 28th, March 7th, March 14th and March 21st

Faithfully Facing Critical Issues and Decisions About End of Life Concerns

All are invited. We all have been or will be touched by these issues and the time to have the discussion is now. With prayer and the bible as our foundation and several experts as our guide let's explore these topics together.

Week 1 – Feb. 28th we will discuss Do not resuscitate/Do not intubate orders, Foregoing Life-sustaining interventions and the role of Congregations.

Week 2 – March 7th Stephanie Fraser will be guiding us in the discussion on Palliative care, pain control and Organ donation.

Week 3 – March 14th Donna Fellingner will be guiding us in the discussion on Advanced Directives/Advance care planning, Health Care Proxy/Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care and Surrogate Decision Making

Week 4 – March 21st Sharon Keegan from the Respite House will be guiding our discussion on Hospice Care and what can a congregation do?

If you have any questions please contact Paula Gile at
p.gile@comcast.net or 802-310-45385.