

THE STEEPLE

Williston Federated Church

An Open and Affirming, Reconciling Congregation

Pastor's Page

Dear members and friends of Williston Federated Church,

Is it just me...or has the summer gone by too quickly? The month of July is one that will hold such precious memories in my spirit. For 10 days, I was blessed to be part of a mission trip to Project Chacocente in Masaya, Nicaragua led by Ashley Dubois. There were 10 teenagers and 4 adults. We worshipped together - thanks to Lillian Coletta who prepared a worship/devotional booklet that we used each morning and evening. We ate meals together - *gallo pinto* - rice and beans appearing for most meals. We worked together with the people of Project Chacocente to build a computer lab - a structure of cement blocks that will be a new addition to the school. Most of all, we built relationships. Relationships made, not of blocks or mortar, not of hammer and nails, but relationships of flesh and blood, smiles and laughter, tears and compassion, conversation and silence. Upon my return from Nicaragua, a quick turn-around, then Gary and I flew to California to spend 10 days with three of our children - Anna, Joe, and Josh. Again, some delightful activities - hiking, swimming, meeting their friends. And - like the trip to Nicaragua - continuing to build those precious family relationships.

Now. August. Enough warm days to keep alive these summer joys: blackberries ripe and warm in the backyard, kayaking at the lake, a summer concert, a good book. And enough of the coolness in the early morning and evening to give a glimpse of September and the fall. The church year has a new and energetic beginning in September. You will read in this newsletter of the start of Sunday School on September 12, including an all-church breakfast served at 8 am. You will read about Bible Study being offered after worship on Sunday and at other times during the week. Check out the calendar and see all the committees that will come together with new members elected at our Annual meeting in June. Be sure to put September 11 on your calendar for our 4th annual Corn Roast at the Isham Farm. Do you have a junior or senior high student in your household? Then September 19 is a date to save for the kick-off of youth ministry. And thanks to the men of the church, a women and girls banquet will be served on September 24 at 6 pm. I find it a treat for body and soul to have these men plan, serve and clean-up - don't you!

Wow! In the midst of our busy lives, here is a thought. Each morning in Nicaragua - before breakfast - we would gather to read Scripture, pray, have conversation and respond to these questions, "Where do you see God?" "Where do you find God?" No matter how full our schedule; no matter the agenda for the day, we would pause and find that still and holy center that is the reason for our being. In his collection of Bengali poems, Rabindranath Tagore writes, "the song I wanted to sing has never happened because I have spent my days stringing and unstringing my instrument." How we yearn to have the songs sung that God has placed in our hearts but sometimes we become so preoccupied with the details of life, the song remains unsung.

My invitation to you for September is this...where do you sense God in this moment? Where do you seek God's presence in your life? How do you respond? In the midst of our busy and full days and lives; in the midst of "stringing and unstringing" may you feel the fullness of God's love and compassion. Blessings on the journey.

Peace,

Pastor Joan



**September
2010
No. 9**

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**Sunday Worship
Service:
9:30 AM**

Pastor:
Rev. Joan Newton O'Gorman
Local Pastor:
Rev. Charlie Magill
Church Secretary:
Suzi Ange-Roland
**Organist and Choir
Accompanist:**
Carolyn Pillsbury
Music Director:
Martin Hain
Nursery Caregiver:
Michelle Davis

Brady's Smile ~ Mothers Without Borders Vermont is proud to host this wonderful organization that provides homemade fleece blankets to babies and children in both NICU's and PICU's in the Northeast. Can you use scissors and tie knots? Then you can make a Brady Blanket! All the fabric will be provided. This is a great project for your family, friends, sports team, club or organization! Join the fun for one hour or all morning on October 2nd from 9am to 3pm at Mt. Abraham High School in Bristol, VT. Brady's Smile founder, Annie Hinton, will be speaking at 9am. To volunteer, please call 459-2976. See you there!

Corn Roast ~ Saturday, Sept. 11th is the 4th Annual Church Family Corn Roast-The Isham family has kindly offered their farm barn again this year. Join family and friends at their farm on Oak Hill Road, from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. for our Corn Roast and Pot Luck dinner. There will be activities and games for the young and young at heart. Rain or shine! Save the date! Sign up on the bulletin board to attend and help. This event is sponsored by the Membership Committee.

Women and Girls: Mark your calendar for Friday September 24. The men of the church are going to treat you to a gala banquet at 6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Men and Boys: Once upon a time the men of the church would have a "Mother / Daughter dinner every year. To be more inclusive, this September 24 we will present a "Women and Girls Banquet." Please sign up to help: buy food, cook, take reservations, serve, entertain, clean up, etc. Contact Charlie Magill at cmagillvt@aol.com or at 879-6238.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You to the anonymous parishioner for the generous donation of a replacement fan for the Senior Exercise Class.

Mission Trips Planned:

Cedar Rapids Iowa

Jack Hill is organizing a team to return September 25 to October 3 and continue efforts to rebuild houses in Cedar Rapids Iowa that were flooded. Maximum cost is estimated to be less than \$400. If you are interested or want more information, contact him at vfhills@yahoo.com

Return to Vancleave, Ms. and the Hinton Rural Life Center, Hayesville, NC

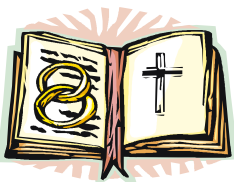
Jay and Cathie Dunkleberger will lead a team to this area from October 10 to 16. It will be a mixed team, with some construction/maintenance work and some other skills needed. Some will be working in the community, some working at the center, and some working at the domestic abuse center operated thrift store. Cost is expected to be \$250. plus your transportation. Some car pooling will be arranged.

Vermont House

A group of thirty will be traveling to Vancleave Ms. the week of October 17-23, 2010 to work on homes in the area. We plan to visit the Vermont House while we are there. Space is limited to 30 so if you are interested let us know as soon as possible. This Teacher Convention week, a short week for school and the trip is suitable for youth. Cost is estimated at \$500 including air fare. Contact Tony Lamb, 878-1251 alamb@alamblaw.com for details, or Ken Stone.

Hurricane Relief in Gulfport, MS.

A group of fifteen will be joining the North Ferrisburg Methodist Church working in Gulfport MS on homes damaged by hurricanes the week of February 20-26. This is school vacation week and ten youth from North Ferrisburg are expected to attend. Cost is estimated at \$500 including air fare. Contact Tony Lamb, 878-1251 alamb@alamblaw.com for details, or Ken Stone.



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.

September 5

Jeremiah 18:1-11
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
Philemon 1-21
Luke 14:25-33

September 12

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28
Psalm 14:1-7
1 Timothy 1:12-17
Luke 15:1-10

September 19

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1
Psalm 79:1-9
1 Timothy 2:1-7
Luke 16:1-13

September 26

Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15
Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16
1 Timothy 6:6-19
Luke 16:19-31



Kids4Peace July 2010 ~ The annual Kids4Peace gathering, held in Burlington in July, brought together a group of outstanding young teens to enjoy a camping situation and to celebrate the diversity and insight of the group. The presentation of

their original skits, on the final evening of camp was inspirational and filled with hope. If we are ever to know true peace in our world, it will begin with these youngsters and the millions like them around the world who are honest, tolerant and have their priorities in order. They came together from various places in the world. They met as strangers. They accepted each other first, as human beings, then soon became friends. Somewhere in this adventure, as friendships were deepening, they began to explore each other's faith and religious beliefs and to accept the challenge of preparing the skits for presentation with words, music and artistic props. Christian, Jewish and Muslim kids, lightly and playfully taking part in the depiction of each other's worship and holiday observances. There was laughter, missed cues, momentary loss of memory, but, beneath it all, a deep reverence and respect for each other. How helpful it would be, towards ending conflict in the world, if adults were to show such respect and maturity when they enter "Peace" talks or sessions of congress. Instead, the frequent approach is "Who is going to be the one to make the charges and accusations to create a certain defeat of this effort?" In other words, "agree to disagree". These youngsters sang with youthful abandon. Some of the verses were: "We are tired of the fighting. We can do the right thing. We can see that Peace is coming for everyone. For you and me and all the world. We are all seeds of peace." Their final offering: "Now, in this ancient sand, Holy Land-Time for the pain to heal. A time to mend and understand." Peace-Salaam-Shalom, Yvonne Alexander.

A Thank You ~ Please stop by the bulletin board to read the "Thank You" poster recently received from the United Church of Christ in gratitude for "Our Church's Wider Mission" - \$3,815 given in 2009. This giving beyond our local church, in addition to our Apportionments to the United Methodist Church assist

many missions and ministries in Vermont, the nation, and the world. Some of these include the support of missionaries and agricultural specialists in developing countries, hunger action, preventive medicine, homes for those with disabilities and camping and outdoor ministries.

Do You Know What VAST Means? ~ Could mean the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers. Could be something really, really big. Could be *The Vermont Academy of Spiritual Training*. VAST is designed for laypersons who wish to develop a greater understanding of the Christian faith. The program is three years in length and classes meet around the state on one Saturday from September through June. A class is held in Richmond. Some of the course offerings include Biblical Studies, Spiritual Formation, and Christian Ethics. For more information, visit www.vtcucc.org and click on the link VAST, or check out the bulletin board, or speak with Pastor Joan.

4th Annual NAMIWalk has moved to Waterfront Park, Burlington September 11, 2010! ~ Get involved in NAMI-Vermont's largest fundraising event of the year - NAMIWalks VT 2010! NAMI-Vermont has exciting news! The 4th Annual NAMIWalk is moving to Burlington this fall! This change is a result of a great opportunity we have to make the 2010 Vermont NAMIWalk the best ever! We plan to take advantage of this change to begin to build a bigger, stronger base of advocates as we reach more deeply into our communities to raise awareness and the much needed funding in order to provide the free programs that NAMI offers to our friends & neighbors. How can you help? Join the Walk Committee ~ come help us plan Walk Day 2010, Sponsor the Walk ~ become a corporate Sponsor ~ levels begin at just \$250, Be a Team Captain ~ gather your friends or coworkers and form a Walk Team, Just Walk ~ Join a Team or register an individual walker or Just Donate ~ support other walkers. To register for the Walk and / or to donate online go to: <http://www.nami.org/namiwalks/VT> or call (800) 639-6480. Please let your friends, family and neighbors know about the WALK's move to the fall and the special opportunity that this presents for all of us! With your talents and enthusiasm, we can reach (and even surpass!) our 2010 goal of at least \$50,000 with 50 teams walking!

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Bible Studies to Begin at the End of September ~ Sunday mornings after worship and during the week, either evening or daytime. A nine week *Invitation to the New Testament* ~ is planned as well as other possibilities. Signup sheets are in the gallery. Please indicate preferences. Questions? Contact Ruth or Charlie Magill, 879-6238 or cmagillvt@aol.com

Great news From the Education Committee!

On September 12th, we will be starting our new Sunday School rotational curriculum for grades preK ~ 5th. Listed below are the topics and workshops for the months of September and October. We also need teachers/helpers for our Jr. and Sr. Sunday School classes. Sign-up sheets for all Sunday School programming can be found in the entryway of the church. Be on the lookout for our November workshops entitled "The Parables of the Great Feast"! Please consider teaching, learning and having fun with the children and youth of the church!

The Beatitudes
September 12th - October 3rd

The Life of Abraham
October 10th - 31st

*Helpers will rotate through each workshop with the same group of students.

Save the Date - September 12th

In order to kick off our **new Rotational Workshop Curriculum** in conjunction with a **new Sunday School session**, the Christian Education Committee will be organizing a church wide potluck breakfast starting at 8am. **This is for everyone!** Sign-up sheets for attendance and food will be posted as the date draws near.