



NOVEMBER
2019

**ALL ARE
WELCOME!
(Open and Affirming,
Reconciling
Statement) :**

We, the Williston Federated Church, declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming, Reconciling congregation. With God's grace, we seek to be a congregation that includes all persons, embracing differences of sexual orientation, gender, marital status, age, mental and physical ability, as well as racial, ethnic, or social-economic background. We welcome all to share in the life and leadership, ministry, and fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of participation in our congregation. (Adopted and embraced by the WFC congregation in February, 2006.)

Message from Pastor Paul

**COMMUNITY
A Note from Pastor Paul
Eyer
NOVEMBER 2019**

It began as a quiet Friday morning at Williston Federated Church. The Men's Bible Study was in full swing as lively conversation and provocative insights were offered around the table. Several congregation members stopped by to offer help. The day care staff labored diligently.

Then came the interruption. A member of the Tiny Dreamers child care staff stepped into the room and announced that the child care area was flooded.

Trustee Chair Tony Lamb got up from the table to investigate. Other men followed. What they found was standing water several inches deep that covered the child care area.

(The day care facility was closed for the day.)

Church Sexton Carmyn Stanko was quick to arrive on the scene, putting in place portable pumps to begin to drain the lake that had formed where the day before children had napped and played.

A contractor was summoned, much work was done, and the waters receded. Several congregation members stopped by to offer to help.

It was a reminder of the power of nature. It was a reminder of the importance of community.

The "Flood of 2019" gave evidence once again that the congregation at Williston Federated Church is committed to service, committed to our community—and committed to each other.

May God bless the beloved community of faith that is Williston Federated Church. As we continue to bask in the glow of the wonderful 150th anniversary celebration last month, may we look for ways to share that special sense of community with all.

With prayers of
Thanksgiving,

Rev. Paul Eyer
Pastor

From the Finance Committee



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The Reach of Our Gifts

Fresh from the celebration of the Sesquicentennial of our beautiful church building, we might pause to ask, “What is the *essence* of WFC?” Beautiful as they may be, the iconic steeple or white clapboards aren’t it. And the rituals we observe through Sunday service, as appealing and fulfilling as they are, also aren’t the essence of the church. Rather, as Pastor Paul reminds us, it’s **community** that makes us who we are.

Over the last month, that sense of community has manifested itself in many ways, perhaps none greater than the outpouring of support for a refugee family from the Congo who lost everything in an apartment fire. Just this past week, that family of seven finally moved into a new apartment, furnished through the generosity of our congregation.

No one individual or group can “solve” the issues of immigration, nor provide for the needs of all those who face the overwhelming challenges this family has

had. And we should remind ourselves that one need not be a person of faith to care about and assist such families.

Yet consider what Wiliston would be like in the absence of our church. And consider what might still be the plight of this one family. If there were no church, and no Pastor Paul, the call for assistance from the U.S Committee on Refugees and Immigrants might not have been received or returned. Without a Mission and Social Concerns Committee, there wouldn’t have been an organized effort to solicit, receive, inventory, store and eventually move all the furniture, household goods, toys, books and gift cards that were donated. Without a congregation that believes in Jesus’ guidance from Matthew 25:35 (“I was a stranger and you welcomed me...”), this project never could have succeeded.

Time, talent, and treasure. We give what we can not because we “should,” but because we love our neighbor. This church, this community, makes this happen, time and again. Thank you for your financial support that en-

ures that this community, in this building or another, will be here for another 150 years.

Your Finance Committee,
 Barb Bristol
 Pastor Paul Eyer
 Donna Goodheart
 Donna-Sue Hain
 Mike Moran
 Amy Vaughan
 Bruce Wyatt



Congregational meeting about security.

On Sunday, November 10 following the worship service, a special congregational meeting will be held to vote on whether to accept the grant to move forward with steps designed to enhance the security and safety of the church building. (The Vermont Department of Public Safety announced last month that they would award Williston Federated Church with the full amount requested in our grant application.) Please plan to be part of this important meeting on November 10.

CHURCH SAFETY

In February 2019, a grant application (authorized by the Official Board) was submitted to the Vermont Homeland Security Unit for funding to enhance safety and security at our church.

Guiding principles:

safety:

the *raison d'être* for this step;

care for others:

As the Apostle Paul said to the elders of a first century church:

Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock...to shepherd the church of God. (Acts 20:28 NRSV)

seven-day-a week usage:

the grant application was crafted with an awareness that portions of our church facility are in use seven days a week by a variety of community groups as well as by our congregation. These recommendations are intended to enhance safety for all who come here.

history and aesthetics:

care was taken to respect the historic and aesthetic value of our church property as the grant application was formulated. NO changes are envisioned that would adversely affect the ex-

ternal appearance of our church structure.

a sense of welcome and invitation:

Task Force members believe that implementation of the grant will further enhance the spirit of hospitality that already characterizes our congregation and our worship services

Items included in

grant: If approved, this grant would provide funding for the following:

Safe rooms.

By strengthening doors and locks, we can make designated spaces in the church into "safe rooms" in the unlikely event of an armed intruder. (Law enforcement workshops on how to respond to active aggressors emphasize the importance of such safe rooms.)

The grant application envisions the following possible "safe rooms": the attic, the kitchen, the music room, the balcony room, and the Sitting Room. The Day Care requested a safe room be set up using the storage room in their area.

(Amount requested in grant application for

this item: \$6500 for lock and door upgrades; \$8010 for special door upgrade)

Safeguarding windows.

A transparent, shatter-resistant film (wrap) would be placed on strategic windows of the church, including the glass of external doors, glass of safe room doors, and strategic safe room windows. Not only would this help to protect the windows from the impact of errant soccer balls or other airborne objects, it would help to protect those who might be injured if windows are shattered, and would slow entry into the church via windows and door glass by an intruder intent on harm.

(Amount requested in grant application for this item: \$3500)

Remote Locking system.

In the rare event that an active aggressor is about to enter church premises (whether on a Sunday or during the week), a mechanism would be in place to lock (remotely) all entrances to the church. (It would still be possible to exit the church, but a perceived



MAKING A SAFE PLACE EVEN SAFER

CHURCH
SAFETY

threat could not enter while this remote locking device is activated.)

(Amount requested in grant application for this item: \$10,857)

Day Care access.

A video monitor and access system would be provided in the entry area to the day care so that day care staff would be able to remotely and securely view those seeking access to their space. **This is the only video device included in the final iteration of the grant materials.** *(Amount requested in grant application for this item: \$1109)*

Non-grant items. There are a number of safety and security facility recommendation items that have been identified that are related to grant items but were not able to be included in the requested grant funding.

Removal of one of the doors into the Sitting Room,

Replacement of the large set of sliding glass plates (windows) in the Administration office wall with a sheet rocked wall and smaller sliding window,

Removing the windows located in back stairway leading into the day care,

Upgrading the exterior door windows in the day care storage room.

The Day Care has requested that the two doors in the back of the day care be able to be locked and secured. Most of these items are relatively low cost items and labor could possibly be completed by volunteers.

Training workshops:

The Security Task Force is also recommending the following training opportunities to promote safety at the church (and beyond):

Fire safety,

fire extinguisher locations and use, fire drills; **“Responding to an Active Aggressor”** workshop (led by State Police);

First Aid,

CPR, and “Stop the Bleed” training.

Taken together, we believe that these modest passive improvements included in the grant proposal will further enhance the safety of our church facilities and provide an even more welcoming space for our congregation and the community.

Your Security Task Force

Mike Moran, Chair
Ken Morton
Toby Rockwood
Shawn Hollick
Paul Eyer, Pastor



Kindness Rocks at Williston Federated Church

Williston Federated Church was present this year at the Community Wide Chowder Challenge held October 6th on the Town Green. Chowder was not on the menu, however we were offering up a smorgasbord including: kindness rocks, doggie treats, a baby changing station

and a prayer board. Just one more way that we are reaching out to people in our community.

Sponsored by the Vitality Team.

