

## ***Our Mission***

***By God's Grace, West Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ,  
is committed to Nurturing and Celebrating God's Love in our lives, in the  
Church Family, in the Community and in the world***

# **May 2022 newsletter Steeple View West Parish Congregational Church United Church of Christ**

## **Pastor's Perspective May, 2022**

Grace and peace to you! Happy Eastertide, and I hope that you are enjoying spring as it slowly, gradually manifests itself. This is the season of resurrection, hope, and possibility and, despite the bad news that seems to always be with us, the good news of resurrection and new life always will have the final word.



We had a very good first retreat this past Sunday and began the conversation about what our purpose and mission as a church is in this new time. It was well-attended—both on ZOOM and in person—and there was good, honest reflection about the importance of the church in our lives, especially during these last two years of social isolation and upheaval. We also began addressing the questions of what ways of doing things we have learned that we would like to keep going forward...and what things that we may want to leave behind. What we are doing is reimagining, or revisioning, how to be the church. This is something that all churches have to do to remain open to God working through them and bringing new ideas and new creativity. But it's especially important now as so much has changed both inside and outside of the church.

I just learned through a colleague, Doretta Colburn (pastor of the Waterford UCC church), of a new opportunity offered by the BTS Center called “Fostering Imagination: Building the Resilient Church” in which small churches (and, yes, we are a small church) form groups of 4-5 people to participate in a learning community that would attend the online program twice a month during the upcoming summer months. It seems to fit exactly with what we are hoping to achieve. Here's a description from the BTS Center website:

“Two years into a global pandemic, having lived through a season of tremendous disruption and uncertainty and loss, and facing the urgent crises of our world, many congregations are feeling a collective sense of weariness and disorientation. At nearly every level of society, change is stirring — accelerating change, traumatic change, complex change that requires transformative leadership — and faith communities are trying to find their bearings. In times of dramatic change, small congregations can respond in two



ways: they can become more rigid, holding tight to status quo — a path that often leads to burnout, decline, and death; or they can step into the changing realities with curiosity and faith, adopt practices that nurture resilience, and embrace imaginative possibilities. Both pathways are possible, but choosing the way of imagination requires intentionality, because in times of anxiety, stress, and fear, our imaginative capacity can be diminished and difficult to access. As author, innovator, and environmental activist Rob Hopkins has noted, “We are living in a time of imaginative decline at the very time in history when we need to be at our most imaginative.”

Beginning in spring 2022, and continuing through the fall, The BTS Center will convene a Small Church leadership community comprised of teams from small churches in Northern New England — Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts — with the intention of exploring practices that nurture spiritual and ecological imagination within congregational life. Through shared reading and exploration, twice-monthly Zoom gatherings, participation in The BTS Center’s Convocation in early October, and engagement with intentional practices designed to inspire hearts and minds, congregational teams will be guided to stretch their imagination muscles and step into the future with imaginative abundance and deeper resilience.”

I am going to apply and would love to have 4-5 others in the church who will join me. If you are feeling called to take part, let me know. The first session is on June 14th.  
Happy Easter to you and your family and see you soon!  
Tim

## **Smile Fund Sale is May 14**

The Smile Fund is a denture program for adults in the SAD 44 community. The World Service Committee administers the funds, with an application process. The primary goal is to give people without means to pay for dentures an opportunity to get them, feel better about themselves and be able to work to support themselves. Too many people are afraid to apply for a job as they can’t smile. Dentures allows people to eat food, provide better nutrition to improve their physical and mental health. This community-wide program has helped about 96 people since we started.

The sale is Saturday, May 14 in the church dining room from 9 AM to noon. Please drop off any donations prior to Friday, May 13, as a crew is pricing the items then. Help is needed all three days.

## **Happy Eastertide from WPCC Christian Ed**

We had a terrific Easter Egg Hunt, as well as Easter morning services. It was wonderful to see many families that weekend. Life for our families is starting to get very busy, as it always does in May and June every year. We have some CE events scheduled over the next two months. They are:

- \* Friday, April 29, 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM Middle School Youth Group begins (grades 6-9)

- \* Sunday, May 1, May Day celebration after church outside the church building (bring your own picnic). There will be crafts and a May Pole. All are welcome.



- \* Friday, May 13 – Middle School Youth Group 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM
- \* Sunday, June 5 – 10:00 AM Children and Youth Sunday, outdoor worship on Gould lawn next to the church.

We continue using the Sunday School curriculum, called Celebrate Wonder. Our recent stories have been of Jesus' last week with the disciples and Easter. Holy Week is full of many central events in the life, teaching, and death of Jesus. We are glad that this curriculum allowed us to take the time to learn about these last days without being rushed into one Sunday School lesson on Palm Sunday. Since Easter we have been learning of the stories of the disciples and friends of Jesus, and their encounters with him, post- Resurrection. Coming up is Paul's encounter with the risen Christ.

If you would like to help get involved with our Christian Education work with children, youth, and families, contact Patricia at [pboylewight@gmail.com](mailto:pboylewight@gmail.com). We like to work intergenerationally, so if you are so inspired to do so, we would love your participation.

Blessings to you all.  
Patricia and the CE committee.



## WPCC School

We excitedly prepared for May Day by preparing a puppet show and making decorations. We're researching this custom and hope to share what we learn at our all church May Day festival after worship on Sunday, May 1. We hope you'll join us for a walk around the May pole, making May baskets and recycled materials crafts, and watching our puppet show.

Can you believe we're in the home stretch? We end our school year on May 26. We are wrapping up projects such as biography writing, our poetry and figurative language unit, and weather vs. climate studies.

Our highlights this month have been:

Making natural dyes for coloring eggs. We researched what pioneers and colonists would have used. We roasted onions, beets, and walnuts and successfully made colorful dyes.

We made a paint pendulum for our force and motion unit in science... it was super messy but fun. Oh, and the marble runs Mr. Chandler made for us have been well used and loved.

We are learning watercolor techniques in Art. The kids' art impressed us every week. Students look forward to painting and count down the days until the next class.

Reading and discussing our history studies is a well loved activity. Lucy is loving reading about the California Gold Rush. Ruby is learning about the Salem Witch trials. Will is diving into biographies of our nation's founding fathers. We love learning from each other.



Studying fossils is now an obsession. We sorted and categorized real fossils. We did a learning scavenger hunt at The Gem Museum and we have a large tub on loan from our favorite paleontologist to look at under our microscope.

As we near the end of our academic year, the students, parents and teachers thank the church community for your support. The children have grown academically in leaps and bounds. They formed bonds with each other and the church community. We all feel a deep connection and gratitude.

## **Smile Fund Thanks and Love Bowl**

I want to share this heartfelt thank you from a recent recipient of dentures from our church. The Love Bowl for May is for the Smile Fund program. We all make a difference in people's lives. Give generously for the Smile Fund and support the Smile Fund sale May 14 from 9 AM to noon. This month the Love Bowl will go to the community-wide denture fund, the Smile Fund.

"I want to thank you and your teams for my new teeth. I can eat again. Smile! And I feel so much more confident, when I am talking to people in public. It means so much to me. I cannot begin to express my thanks."

## **Congratulations, graduates**

As a church we are very proud of all that our young students have accomplished. It is a time of change as they step out into the world, supported by their church family.

Hannah Pierce graduates from Gould Academy and will attend UVM in the fall and will study sociology.

Kaitlyn Brown graduates from University of Maine Augusta.

Marta Opie graduates from Colby College.

Caroline Siekman graduates from Gould Academy and will attend Vassar College.

## **Flower List for May**

Thank you, Susan, for organizing the list of people to place the flowers in the sanctuary each Sunday, helping to beautify our church. You have helped all of us see the beauty shared by others. There are more opportunities to sign up for other weeks. Please let Susan Herlihy know if you would like to share something for the sanctuary.

May 8	Beth Brough in memory of Walter
May 15	Donna Coe
May 22	Marilyn Sahlberg
May 29	Mary Scanlon in memory of her parents



**Thanks to the Congo Craftsmen for the many benches on nearby trails.**

## **Birthdays and Anniversaries in May**

May 2 – Patricia Boyle-Wight

May 5 – Jennifer Doyle

May 4 – Amy Davis

May 23 – Jennifer and Jamie Doyle

May 19 – Dick Bennett

May 13 – Priscella and Dean Walker

May 18 – Debra and Dean Richmond

May 20 – Carol Nielson

May 22 – Mary and Tim LeConey

May 24 – Molly Keane

May 28 – Tim LeConey

May 30 – Kliness (Donna Coe's grandchild)

May 31 – Molly Firmin (Donna Coe's grandchild)

## **Church Calendar for May**

Sunday, May 1 - Worship with Communion at 10 AM at church and on YouTube Live

May Day activities sponsored by the WPCC School immediately after church

Oxford Union Association Spring Meeting at 1 PM on ZOOM

Tuesday, May 3 Prayer Group at 8:45 AM at church/on ZOOM

Stewardship Committee at 10 AM at church

Wednesday, May 4 - Men's Breakfast at 8 AM at church/on ZOOM

Thursday, May 5 - Christian Education Committee at 12 PM at church and on Zoom

Pastoral Relations Committee at 1 PM at church

Sunday, May 8 - Worship at 10 AM at church and on YouTube Live

Tuesday, May 10 Prayer Group at 8:45 AM at church/on ZOOM;

Trustees at 6:30 PM on ZOOM

Wednesday, May 11 - World Service Committee at 3 PM at church/on ZOOM

Thursday, May 12 – set up for Smile Fund Sale

Church Council 6:45 PM on Zoom

Friday, May 13 – Pricing for Smile Fund Sale

Saturday, May 14 - Smile Fund Sale, 9 AM-1 PM

Sunday, May 15 - Worship at 10 AM at church/ on YouTube Live

Monday, May 16 - Monday, May 30 - Rev. Tim on Vacation

Tuesday, May 17 Prayer Group at 8:45 AM at church/on ZOOM;

Deacons at 10 AM at church/on ZOOM

Sunday, May 22 - Worship at 10 AM at church/ on YouTube Live

Tuesday, May 24 - Prayer Group at 8:45 AM at church/on ZOOM

Sunday, May 29 - Worship at 10 AM at church/ on YouTube Live

Monday, May 30 - Memorial Day

## **Book Group this Tuesday**

Book Group will meet Tuesday, May 3 at 7 PM to discuss *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah. We will meet in person in the Chapel and by Zoom.

The next books are:

June 7 - *The Sentence* by Louise Eldrich

July 5 - *The Things we Lost to the Water* by Eric Nguyen.

Any are welcome to the monthly book discussions. Contact Jane Chandler for a ZOOM link.

## **Coffee order May 8**

Buying coffee and tea from Equal Exchange bypasses the middle man and gives more directly to the local coffee grower. The next coffee order is Sunday, May 8. Just let Jane know what you want to order and she will let you know the amount.

When Equal Exchange started in 1986, they purposely set out to build both a new and more equitable model of international trade and a rare-in-the-U.S. democratic business. They broke many of the conventional rules of the market with the goal to trade fairly with farmers and build democratic supply chains. The concepts of fair trade and alternative trade were barely known at that time. Today, while they are a much larger organization with more than 100 worker-owners and a significant national and international scale, they are still living the original wild-eyed dream and breaking conventions with every purchase made from their trade partners in coffee, bananas, cocoa, and tea.



## **Maine Conference Covenant of Care**

This Covenant of Care has been adopted by the Maine Conference Board of Directors as useful during any gathering of Conference leadership and is suggested as a model for all the churches of the Conference. The goal of all we do and all people we deal with is WELL BEING.

Our Church Council voted at its meeting on March 3, 2022, to adopt this language to be used at the beginning of all committee meetings and to be printed on all meeting agendas.

“We covenant to care for one another and offer compassion in thought, word, and deed. We will listen to learn, inquire to understand, and speak for hope and not harm. In both similarities and differences, we will ask for God’s grace and offer it freely to one another. Above all else, we will love and respect one another.” - Steve Wight, Moderator