



Yay! A new kitchen almost done! More pictures inside.

## “SpiritSpark”



**The First Baptist Church of Manchester Center, VT**  
P.O. Box 1049, 4895 Main St. 802-362-1555 [www.fbcmanvt.org](http://www.fbcmanvt.org)  
fbcmanvt@gmail.com

**Pastor: Rev. Rebecca Sommons**

**March**

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### **A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR REBECCA**

Dear Church Family,

I've been doing some thinking and reading about Lent. It is a season in which we are invited to prepare our hearts to remember Christ's death and resurrection. One of the ways we can prepare is to surrender something for the these 40 days that will remind us of the way Jesus surrendered his life for us. If the Holy Spirit does bring something to our mind that distracts us from our relationship with God, then that might be the thing we are being invited to surrender. The purpose is not to persuade God that we are earnest, so He will love us more. Rather, it is to become more aware of God's love for us as we endeavor to respond in self-giving love.

In *Silencio: Reflective Practices for Nurturing Your Soul*, I came across a quote by Martin L. Smith, SSJE. “*What we are called to give up in Lent is control itself... and lay down (surrender) my resistance to the One who loves me infinitely more than I can guess, the One who is more on my side than I am myself.*” This is a question we could bring to God in prayer, asking Him to reveal where we are resisting intimacy with Him.

I’ve noticed that God is much more patient than I am. So I think that my invitation for Lent is to embrace patience every single day. It will include choosing to be patient with a renovation process that is taking longer than I expected. I will ask God to help me be patient with interruptions that prevent me from accomplishing my plans for the day. To draw closer to God’s sense of timing, I will need the Holy Spirit to enable me to be patient with people who see things differently than I do. I want to be a good listener, both to God and to other people. That takes time and patience too. I’m pretty sure that I will also need to be patient with myself in all of this, because I’ve got some growing to do in this fruit of the Spirit.

I think there may be a spiritual practice or two that will help me to remember this intention through this season of Lent. The practices aren’t an end in themselves, but they can be helpful as they give us a structure to lean into as we seek to draw close to God’s heart. I hope that you’ll feel God’s invitation especially designed for you and that you’ll choose to accept it.

Love in Christ,

*Pastor Rebecca*

### **NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING**

The members of the First Baptist Church of Manchester Center, VT are hereby notified to meet in their house of worship at Manchester Center, VT on March 8, 2020 following worship for the following purposes:

1.) To hear and act upon the proposal for the electrical renovation of the sanctuary.

2.) To hear and act upon the proposal for repair of the slate roof

3.) To discuss and act upon any other business to come before the meeting.

**Church Clerk, Martha Thompson**

## **MARY MARTHA FELLOWSHIP**

This month members of the Mary Martha Fellowship have been working hard getting the dishes, serving dishes and pots and pans, etc. back in the kitchen. Kudos to Lisa Hess, Lisa Towslee and Ashley Hess making that old Garland stove sparkle. The back splash on the stove has also been replaced and the stove will look like brand new when it's put in place under the new hood.

A tentative date has been set for a pork roast dinner to be held on March 21, 2020. Hopefully this will be decided in the next week or so. Stay tuned.

We are going to be a busy group with the upcoming Basket Party scheduled for March 28, 2020.

Our next meeting is planned for March 8, 2020 beginning at 8:30 A.M.

Martha Thompson, Secretary

## **MISSIONS COMMITTEE**

New officers: Chairperson: Judy Koch

Secretary: Linell Pike

Treasurer: Linda Bushee

Member: Dottie Beers

Financial Balance: \$409.19

We collected the RMMO (Retired Ministers & Missionary Offering) in January.

We continue to support our missionary, Jenny, in Thailand at \$50.00 a month.

Leon Nyakunhus, our student, receives \$105.00 quarterly.

Pastor Rebecca and Matt will present a slide show of their Rwanda trip on April 26. This was originally scheduled for February 23, but rescheduled because of the kitchen renovation. There will also be a celebration meal using recipes from Rwanda.

Our church mission moment will be on March 8 when we will begin collecting for the America for Christ offering.

On February 9<sup>th</sup>, we began the use of offering boxes, instead of passing the offertory plates.

We will schedule a time to spring clean after the kitchen renovation is complete-very dusty! Watch for the date.

We discussed helping our Sister church in Kimihira with Paster Ayloy. There are 15 students who need help with their tuition. We continue to pray for their community.

Our next meeting will be March 11th at 3PM.

Submitted by Linell Pike, Secretary

### **Getting to Know Our New Member – by Barbara West**

We recently had some new members join our church. It was pointed out that not all of us have really gotten to know these people, so we are going to be sharing some information about them to help you know who they are. We will do this over the next couple of months. Our first person to get to know is Cara Davenport.

Cara has been attending our church for several years, so most of us have had an opportunity to interact with her for a while. This will serve as a very short biography of a truly interesting young lady.

Cara grew up in Manhattan until she was 7 and her family moved to South Jersey. While she was in high school she played soccer and track. After graduation she went to Houghton College and majored in English and biology.

Her job experiences have been varied and interesting. For her first job she lived in Alaska for 2 months and worked in a fish cannery. Afterwards she worked on a farm in NJ, and next lived in Massachusetts while she worked for Americorps. This job had her working in schools educating students on the environment and forestry. It also involved maintaining hiking trails.

Cara developed an interest in baking while she was in college. With that still in her mind, she found out about an internship at Earth Sky and Time Community Farm here in Manchester where she learned to bake bread. While she was there she started attending First Baptist. After visiting several churches she decided she felt very comfortable and welcome in our church. We were the luck beneficiaries of her decision.

When her internship ended she became a Trail Director in Delaware Water Gap where she maintained trails and did other outdoor work. When that job ended she decided to take an internship at Merck Forest where she has multiple responsibilities and continues to work outdoors. Since this position brought her back to our area it also brought her back to First Baptist. Since her return she has taken on numerous responsibilities at the church. She has joined the choir, become a member of the Diaconate, and is currently leading the Prayer Group with Rebecca.

Some of Cara's poetry has been shared with us by Rebecca and was published in the newsletter. Her interest in poetry began when she took a Poetry, Liturgy, and Worship course at Houghton College. Part of this course was to interpret the story of Advent and parts of the Bible into poetry. It was a wonderful meditative experience for her. We reaped some of the benefits of that course when she preached a sermon on Joy Sunday in Advent.

When asked if there was anything she wanted us to know about her that we might not know she shared that she and her father have run two marathons and they plan to run another one in Chicago in October.

We welcome Cara to our church family and are very glad she has chosen us. Blessings on you Cara!

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

SAVE THE DATE! The Christian Education Committee is planning to hold its second annual Cabin Fever Pot Luck and Game Night on Saturday March 21. Dinner will be from 5-6 and games from 6-8. There will be a sign-up sheet in the vestry soon for dinner and dessert sign-ups.

Below are some pictures from the mid-February sledding party with the youth.



Ronan



Emily and Lydia



Ronan, John Hess, Emily and Cheryl Hess (Photos by Pastor Rebecca)

### **DIACONATE COMMITTEE**

We appreciate that many of you remember our fellowship fund and contribute to it regularly. Please continue to give as you are able.

The young adult group is still interested in getting together soon. If anyone knows of anything that you believe would be good to do, please let me know.

The coffee hour after our services are being put on hold for now as we wait for the kitchen/vestry to be a more useable space. We will still have fellowship time within the sanctuary.

Looking forward! Palm Sunday is on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Good Friday is on April 10<sup>th</sup>. Easter is on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

Our next meeting is March 17<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm.

Kelsey Towslee, Secretary

### **INTERFAITH COUNCIL**

The Interfaith Council of the Northshire (IFCN) meets once a month on the first Thursday of the month, except for July and August, at member churches. Cantor Scott Buckner is the present chair. Members representing our church are Carol Lattuga, Martha Thompson and, of course, Rebecca Sommons.

The IFCN is the umbrella 513C for several organizations. One of these organizations is Auto Angels. Automobiles that are in decent shape are sought by Auto Angels and are given to worthy recipients. A car can make a huge difference in a person's life giving them the ability to drive back and forth to a job, getting to childcare, or perhaps saving on rent by living out of higher rent areas. Do you have a car that might help? A car you would be willing to donate? It means a significant tax break and could help change a person's life for the better. Call 362-1516 for giving or getting information about this program.

Submitted by Martha Thompson

**KITCHEN PICTURES** (See more on the church website.)



An empty room and a hole in the floor!

There are now two windows into the vestry area. This one is where the dishes are returned and can be rinsed and loaded into the NEW DISHWASHER! The one on the other side of the half wall is where the food goes out from the kitchen.



Many, many hands are part of this renovation – packers, cleaners, luggers and painters. But special appreciation goes to Jeremy Crumb whose strong leadership is guiding the process and to Lorraine Wilkins who led the packing up of the kitchen so the renovation could happen!



It's time for the annual Mary & Martha Basket Party. It will be held on March 28th at the VFW Hall on Route 30. Doors will open at 11:00 am. Drawing will begin at 1:00 pm. Food will be sold separately. It will be \$5.00 for the first set of 25 tickets, entrance fee and a chance at the door prizes. Additional tickets can be purchased for \$3.00 each. Mary & Martha would appreciate any donations of baskets of goodies. Do you like to cook? Bake a cake. Make fudge. Arrange a plate of homemade cookies. We are also asking for food donations. Sign up sheets are hanging in the vestry. We will also need people to help the day of the event. As the date gets closer, I will be able to tell you if we will set up the night before or the morning of. Come join us. See what fun it is!



**ON SUNDAY, MARCH 8!**



**OUR CHURCH IS PRIVILEGED TO BE ABLE TO OFFER  
OUR FACILITY TO THE FOLLOWING AA GROUPS  
EACH WEEK.**

Equinox Group: Mon-Fri from Noon to 1:00 pm  
Thursday Morning Men's Group: Thursday 7:30-8:30 am  
Primary Purpose Group: Sunday 7:30-8:30 pm

**IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Church Office Hours 9:30-12:30 AM on Tuesdays and Wednesdays  
Pastor Rebecca's e-mail address: [rebeccasommons@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccasommons@gmail.com)  
Pastor Rebecca's cell phone: (802) 688-3024  
Church office Phone: (802) 362-1555  
Please call to request a meeting or visit outside of regular church office hours.

**FLOWERS**

March 1: Lorraine Wilkins  
March 8: Lindy Mylott  
March 15: Lisa & Chris Towlsee  
March 22: Lisa & Chris Towslee  
March 29: Maurie Hill

**CHILD CARE PROVIDERS**

March 1: Maurie & Brittany  
March 8: Cathy & Lindy  
March 15: Dottie & Bryan  
March 22: Lisa & Annie  
March 29: Cheryl & Linell