

Rufus Gilbert on a 16' 3200 lb. saw log ca. 1920 from the Graham Williams collection (MHS)

## **“SpiritSpark”**

### **The First Baptist Church of Manchester Center, VT**

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**Pastor: Rev. Rebecca Sommons**

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**FEBRUARY 2022**

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

Dear Church Family,

February has me contemplating the coldness of the winter landscape and my desire for all things warm. I like slippers, blankets, cups of steaming tea, and a warm shower or bath. These things ease the tension of tight muscles and help me relax and feel a sense of belonging instead of merely survival.

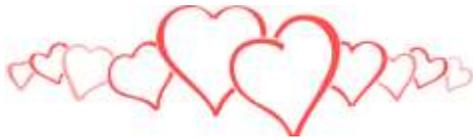
It is not just the weather that is cold; our social climate has been a bit chilly lately too. Some people are isolating to try to protect their health. Others have jobs that bring them into the company of others regularly, but find things quite tense there. People have been in survival mode for a long time and their nerves can be a bit frayed.

How can we be warm-hearted when things around us are cold, physically and emotionally?

I believe it is the love of God inside us that generates warmth that benefits us and others we encounter. In Romans 5:5, we read ~ *“We are able to hold our heads high no matter what happens and know that all is well, for we know how dearly God loves us, and we feel this warm love everywhere within us because God has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love”* (The Living Bible). God’s love is warm, and when we are filled with it, we are warm people. Our mouths are not full of complaints and icy remarks that sting others. Instead, they are full of gentleness and patience that can wrap the people who hear see the light in our eyes and hear our words with comfort like a blanket.

2 Corinthians 13:11b-12 (TLB) says ~ *“Live in harmony and peace. And may the God of love and peace be with you. Greet each other warmly in the Lord.”* The colder the climate is, the more people are drawn to warmth. We need it to feel at peace. Whether we are in our homes most of the time or out there in the wide world, we all have opportunities to share the warmth of God’s love with people we encounter. First, we need to soak in it ourselves, then we can notice the ways God’s Spirit nudges us to share the warmth ~ in conversations in person or on the phone, through letters or cards, as we go about our work, and when we come home to our loved ones. May we greet each other warmly in the Lord whose love is our source of warmth. And may we gather together with others who have warm hearts to feel the comfort of a community formed by God’s love and welcome those who want to come in from the cold.

Love in Christ,  
Pastor Rebecca



### **A Few Highlights from Annual Meeting of Sunday, Jan. 23, 2022**

Reports, including the budget committee report, were reviewed and accepted without further discussion. The Nominating Committee reported one empty spot on Christian Education and one on Prudential Committee. Both committees would welcome an interested volunteer.

The By-Laws Committee had a few recommendations.

a.) The audit committee will consist of three persons: a 1 yr. term, 2 yr. term and 3 yr. term starting this year 2022 with the three year term to be chairman. Carol Lattuga will assume 1 yr. term, Jim West will assume 2 yr. term and Judy Koch will assume 3 yr. term.

b.) The Missions Committee will designate funds as FBC Missions and ABC Missions. All offerings for FBC Missions will be dispersed by our local church committee and will include Jen Pedzinski and our World Vision Student, Leon. ABC Missions designates our quarterly offerings (WMO, OGS, RRMO, and AFC) and adding one more yearly offering whose funds will be earmarked for United Missions Basic. The term Benevolence will no longer be used.

c.) It was voted to change the date of Annual Meeting to the first Sunday in February with corresponding changes in by-laws pertaining to details of annual report and meeting details.

Lorraine Wilkins, who is chair of the Prudential Committee, brought up several other issues on the Prudential agenda including sanctuary window repair and roof repair which we will be hearing more about in the near future.

Martha Thompson, Clerk

## ANNUAL MEETING LUNCHEON

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the luncheon for the Annual Meeting. Thank you to those who contributed financially so we could have the luncheon. It was the first time we have done our luncheon in this manner. This did allow people to more easily participate in the meeting and not have other obligations such as cleaning up.

Thank you to the people who helped set up the vestry and downstairs for the luncheon, provided bowls for the soup, took down tables after the luncheon and put the vestry back the way it was, picked up the food at Shaw's in the morning and got it to the church, and all of the help getting things arranged in the refrigerator and then on the tables so people could easily get their lunch. There were many people who helped. It is always so gratifying to see how thoughtful and helpful people are. What a terrific group of people. You are such a blessing and we hope you know that you are appreciated. Of course, that was the main reason for the luncheon. We wanted to celebrate all that you do.

Thank you! Thank you! God bless all of you!

The PRC,

Barb West

Carol Lattuga

Rosemary Hall



## DIACONATE

Members of the Diaconate will help pick up supplies for the Annual Meeting luncheon. The Pastoral Relations Committee made arrangements with Willoughby's for the luncheon to be catered so that all members could have a chance to have a social visit.

Our Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services will be observed together.

Our next meeting will be held Feb. 15, 2022.

~Martha Thompson

## PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE

The Prudential Committee met on January 6 in the vestry.

During our **Old Business** session, the Sanctuary walls continued to be a topic. The wallpaper behind the paint was saturated and therefore, had to be dried out before being painted again. No word from the insurance company on whether they will reimburse us for the painting. Lorraine will contact the insurance company once again.

The new microphones for the choir have arrived and Jeremy has set them up. Now everyone will hear the beautiful voices of the choir.

We have FINALLY gotten to the bottom of the smell in the kitchen. It is the grease trap by the kitchen dishwashing sink. It has been cleaned and WHAT A DIFFERENCE! Lindy Mylott has agreed to clean it for now. THANK YOU! We will appreciate this act of kindness.

The year end audit has been completed. Jenny Sprague graciously agreed to complete this task along with Carol Lattuga. Thank you, ladies!

Carol Lattuga, Barb West, and I met with Rebecca to discuss her contract as the previous contract ended in August, which I then brought back to Prudential.

It was determined that the contract should go until January 2023 because we vote on it at the Annual meeting and it currently ends in August, therefore, this contract would be from August 2021 to January 2023. During this contract discussion, I discovered that the frequency of the contract review appears two different ways in the By-laws. I brought this matter up to the By-laws Committee when we met. All other changes were discussed at the Annual Meeting.

The Roof Committee continues to work on obtaining estimates/quotes. We are currently looking at solar shingles, slate, standing seam, asphalt shingles and rubber slate tiles. The current roof is in VERY bad shape and will only continue to deteriorate.

A discussion of food scraps in the kitchen led to the Prudential Committee deciding that we will no longer put them in the freezer. There are two choices: put them in the garbage or take them with you to your composting bin.

**New Business** found us discussing proposals for By-laws. We created wording for the new Audit Committee and fixed the Pastor's contract review years.

I then gave a demonstration of how to clean the small air filters. They can be vacuumed off a few times, but then need replacing. We are now in the needs replacing phase.

Barbara West requested permission to host a Cancer Support Group in the Vestry. Details are still being worked out. The Prudential Committee whole heartily supports her in this endeavor.

Next Lisa went over the final version of the proposed budget for 2022.

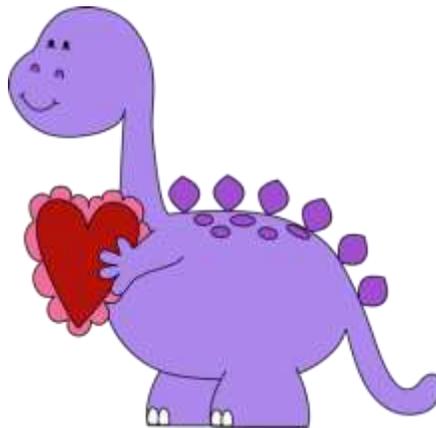
Next meeting at 5:00 pm on Thursday, February 10th via Zoom as I will be in sunny Florida!

Lorraine Wilkins, Chairman

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

The adult Sunday school class will be finishing their study in the book of Hebrews on February 13th. Following that, Craig Keith will be leading a Bible study with the class. The adult class offers an in person and virtual option every Sunday at 9:30. Please join us! Pastor Rebecca and Cheryl Hess will continue leading a children's Sunday school class in the children's room upstairs each Sunday at 9:30.

~Annie Crumb



## **Cancer Support Group - UPLIFT**

Attention to all people who currently are dealing with cancer, or who have had cancer, or someone in your life is dealing with cancer! So many of us are impacted by this disease. In recent months I have had a very strong feeling that it would be a good idea to start a support group for people affected by cancer. The intention of this group would be to lift each other up, discuss things that we have tried or are doing that are helpful, and to just be there as a group to listen and encourage each other. The group name is Uplift! That seemed appropriate for a group of us who are planning to lift each other up.

We will be meeting in the vestry for the first time on Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. At that meeting we will decide if this a convenient time to meet in the future. Please feel free to spread the word and bring people you know who might be interested in participating. Let's Uplift each other! I look forward to seeing all who are interested. Also bring any books or materials you have found helpful. We can share all that we have learned on our journeys.

~Barb West

## **MISSIONS**

The Missions and Outreach Committee designated some funds to a few organizations. Locally we gave to the Northshire Book store for the book angel's Christmas project where children received nice new books and monies were donated to the Interfaith Christmas Distribution.

Through the Heifer Program we contributed to sharing the cost of a water buffalo for folk in India, a flock of chickens, a hive of bees with some harvesting equipment and lending help to mend a child's cleft lip and palate for a hopeful smile.

What a joy there is in your willingness to serve people around the globe and in our town. A sincere "Thank You" for making all this possible for us.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday February 2, 2022 at 7 pm in the Vestry.

God Bless You

Submitted by Linell Pike



## **MARY & MARTHA FELLOWSHIP**

The Fellowship will be purchasing rugs for the kitchen, particularly near the dishwasher. It was decided that the commercial rubber rugs are heavy, inconvenient to clean, and they often need cleaning after using the dishwasher. Regular kitchen rugs will be purchased as they will be easy to pick up, wash and store.

There has been an unpleasant smell emanating from the kitchen. It was discovered that the grease trap is the culprit and regular cleaning will prevent the smell from happening.

It was suggested that it was time for another dinner and therefore a takeout lasagna dinner will be held in March. More to come.

Our next meeting is Sunday, Feb.13, 2022.

~Martha Thompson, Secretary

## **NEIGHBOR to NEIGHBOR**

The steering committee of Neighbor to Neighbor helped Robin Galguera celebrate her last day as Executive Director on Jan, 24th. She will eventually be moving to the Delmarva peninsula with her Prince Charming, Bill Busyk.

Our new director is Suzanne Eisenman and she begins as director on Monday, Jan. 31st. We anticipate getting to know her, hearing her ideas, and working with her.

~Martha Thompson

**OUR CHURCH IS PRIVILEGED TO BE ABLE TO OFFER**

**OUR FACILITY TO THE FOLLOWING AA GROUPS EACH WEEK.**

Breakfast with Your Higher Power Group: Mon-Fri from 7:30-8:30 am (open group)

Equinox Group: Mon – Fri from Noon to 1:00 (open group)

Primary Purpose Group: Sunday 7:30 -8:30 pm (closed gr

**IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

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

Pastor Rebecca continues to remain open and eager to meet with church family. These get-togethers have taken a different look as they have moved away from set office hours. She has, instead, met on an as needed basis. She is happy to meet with you in person, over the phone, or through zoom. When the weather is good, she often meets people outside and talks while taking a walk. She is open to any ideas you may have.

Pastor Rebecca's phone number and email are listed above. Feel free to reach out to her anytime throughout the week.

**CHURCH EVENTS for FEBRUARY**

- Wednesday, Feb. 2 Seeking God Together at 11 am via zoom  
Mission Committee Meeting at 7 pm at church
- Thursday, Feb. 3 Interfaith Council Meeting at noon via zoom  
Choir Practice at 7 pm at church
- Sunday, Feb. 6 Communion at our Worship Service at 10:30 am
- Monday, Feb. 7 Cancer Support Group – UPLIFT in the vestry  
at 3 pm
- Tuesday, Feb. 8 Prayer Group and Book Discussion at 7 pm via zoom (Chapters 22-23)
- Thursday, Feb.10 Prudential Meeting at 5 pm via zoom  
Choir Practice at 7 pm at church
- Saturday, Feb. 12 Youth Baking Activity at the Sommons' home at 1 pm
- Sunday, Feb. 13 Mary and Martha Meeting at 8:30 am and Worship Service at 10:30 am
- Tuesday, Feb. 15 Deacon Meeting at 4:30 pm at church
- Wednesday, Feb.16 Seeking God Together via zoom at 1 pm  
CE meeting at 7 pm
- Thursday, Feb.17 Choir Practice at 7 pm at church
- Saturday, Feb.19 Men's Breakfast and Meeting at church at 9 am
- Sunday, Feb. 20 Worship Service at 10:30 am
- Tuesday, Feb. 22 Prayer Group and Book Discussion at 7 pm via zoom
- Thursday, Feb. 24 Choir Practice at 7 pm at church
- Sunday, Feb. 27 Worship Service at 10:30 am

**FLOWERS**

Feb. 6: John & Cheryl Hess in memory of mothers, Julia Hill & Shirley Guthridge

Feb. 13: Barbara West in memory of father, Mark George

Feb. 20: Dottie Sundquist in loving memory of niece, Jenica Junilla

Feb. 27: Ray & Judy Koch in loving memory of son, Jason Brosemer

