



The Parsonage on Bonnet Street during the 1950's. (from the Manchester Historical Society)
One way the date is determined is by the red church and the WHITE steeple.

"SpiritSpark"

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

P.O. Box 1049, 4895 Main St. 802-362-1555

www.fbcmanvt.org

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Pastor: Rev. Rebecca Sommons

January 2019

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR REBECCA

Dear Church Family,

I am grateful for the way people have pulled together to contribute their gifts this past month. Some have stepped up to share music by lending their instrumental talents or voices, and there has been a wonderful spirit of freedom in worship. It is exciting to see people let the Holy Spirit lead them into new spaces beyond any fear.

I've also been delighted to come into church to find people watering poinsettias, changing lightbulbs, or putting a new message on the sign. It is so encouraging to have people willing to see and meet needs big and small, without any need for recognition. They remind me of the elves in the shoemaker's workshop. In fact, some lovely things, like our Christmas tree, appeared without anyone seeing the one who brought it.

As we move into the new year, I have hope that our church family will continue to cooperate beautifully with one another. It reflects the unity that truly pleases Christ and blesses all of us.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Rebecca Sommons

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Mission Committee continues to try to make wise decisions about how allocated funds are used both in our local community and globally as well. As always, a student is supported monthly and our student is Leon. Information about Leon is on the bulletin board in the vestry. We also are supporting a project in Thailand to help victims of human trafficking. This project is led by a friend of Pastor Rebecca's, Jan Predzinski.

In January we will be taking the Minister and Missionaries Retirement Fund Offering.

~submitted by Martha Thompson

MARY MARTHA FELLOWSHIP

The Mary Martha Fellowship celebrated Christmas by creating "Baskets of Love" for some members and friends of the church. Some did receive actual baskets filled with goodies while others received poinsettias. The Women's Fellowship also bought Christmas gifts for four little girls, two for the Interfaith Council and two from our church, as well as grocery cards for the church family.

The Kitchen Fund is growing and the next project will be a Soup and Bread Luncheon on January 26th for the public. It is tentatively scheduled for 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Lisa Towslee will be chairing this. We will charge for the soup with bread and desserts will be sold separately. Lisa would appreciate volunteers to make soup, bread, and desserts, such as lemon bars, brownies or large cookies.



Dottie Sundquist has again agreed to chair a Lasagna Dinner on Feb.23. Details for this dinner will be in the February newsletter.

Lisa Towslee and Judy Koch are co-chairs of Mary Martha Fellowship and invite any interested women to meet with us on the second Sunday of each month at 8:30 a.m. This group supports the church but is also a support group for each other. Come join in!

~submitted by Martha Thompson, secretary

INTERFAITH COUNCIL NEWS

The Interfaith Council sponsored the Interfaith Holiday Project again this year with Bill and Linda Drunscic's leadership. Nearly 100 families had a brighter Christmas with the community's help.



The Council will be sponsoring a Martin Luther King Worship Service on Monday, January 21, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. This year it will be held at the E. Arlington Federated Church. Cantor Buckner's son, Ethan Buckner, will be our speaker. This coming year might be a good time to be reminded of Martin Luther King's appeals for non-violence.

~submitted by Martha Thompson

Our church collected \$544 for Compassion International projects, to welcome two newborns into the world in honor of Christ's birth, and to also contribute to the health and well-being of other children in need of shelter, food, clothing, medicine, and mosquito nets. Thank you, everyone!

**THE MEN'S GROUP WILL MEET THIS SATURDAY,
JANUARY 5TH AT 8 AM.
COME AND BRING A FRIEND!**



A REMINDER FROM CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sunday School Classes will resume for the young children and adults on January 6th and for the Tweens/Teens on January 13th.



DECEMBER DIACONATE NEWS

This December, the Diaconate committee, as well as other members of First Baptist church, have been challenged in a way many of us haven't experienced in the past. We have risen to the challenge in a creative and courageous manner. Since we no longer have an organist and choir director, many members who are blessed with musical talents such as the ability to play the organ and piano or instruments such as the cello, guitar, saxophone, flute, and cajon, have combined their talents, producing music that is pleasing to the ear and brings joy to the musician, listeners, and singers. We are blessed to be experiencing our church in a different way, one that strengthens us, though we are already strong.

Pastor Rebecca has guided us with her steadfast faith and a belief in our ability to experience a new way of being within our church. We appreciate her strengths, her faith, as well as her leadership skills

Christmas Eve service was led by Pastor Rebecca with other church members, telling the story, the birth of Jesus, through reading the scriptures. It was inspiring and warmed the hearts of those attending. The sanctuary was decorated in glorious traditional boughs and colors, with the pulpit banked in poinsettias.

The Advent season, the four Sundays and weekdays prior to Christmas, was celebrated by lighting of candles in the Advent wreath each Sunday. The wreath stands for the aspects of spiritual preparation leading up the birth of Jesus Christ. At First Baptist, the candles are lit by different families with their children. The first and second candles are purple; the first representing hope, the second faith. The third candle is pink and signifies joy. The final purple candle stands for peace. In the center of the wreath is a white candle portraying purity and is lit on Christmas Eve. The white candle is called the "Christ Candle", representing the life of Christ.

It feels like God has been and is with us every step of the way.

In Christ's Love,

Martha Bowen, Co-chair
Linda Hullett, Co-chair

PRAYER & STUDY GROUP

The Prayer/Study Group will begin a new study on January 8, 2019. Our discussions will be guided by Christine Labrum's new book, Divine Hands and each of the six sessions will be led by Pastor Rebecca.

The Prayer/Study Group meets at the home of Lois Squires every other Tuesday at 7:00 pm and new participants are always warmly welcomed! For more information, see Pastor Rebecca or Lois Squires.



The First Baptist Church ANNUAL MEETING is Sunday, January 27th. If you, or your committee, needs to submit a report, please get it to Jeremy Crumb by January 7, 2019. (jeremy.crumb@gmail.com)

He will compile them and have the Annual Report available for us before annual meeting Sunday.

The annual meeting will follow a quick luncheon after the Sunday service. Please bring your own sandwiches. There will be soup available.

WARNING FOR ANNUAL MEETING

The members of the First Baptist Church of Manchester Center, VT are hereby warned to meet in their house of worship at Manchester Center on Sunday, January 27, 2019, following worship and lunch for the following purposes:

- 1.) To hear the reports of the Officers and committees for the past year and act thereon.
- 2.) To elect Officers and Committee members for the coming year(s).
- 3.) To discuss any other business proper to come before the Annual Meeting.

Martha Thompson, Church Clerk



Thank you to Bryan Richheimer for picking up and returning the video camera from GNAT. Also, to Annie Crumb and Ronan O'Brien for recording our church services.

THANK YOU!!!!

Check out the services on our church website:
www.fbcmanvt.org

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

Pastor Rebecca's cell phone: (802) 688-3024

Church office Phone: (802) 362-1555

Parsonage Phone: (802) 362-5335

Please call to request a meeting or visit outside of regular church office hours.

FLOWERS

Jan. 6: Poinsettias

Jan. 13: Lindy Mylott

Jan. 20: Lisa Towslee

Jan. 27: Lisa Towslee

CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Jan. 6: Lisa & Annie

Jan. 13: Jenny & Cheryl

Jan. 20: Maurie & Kristen

Jan. 27: Cathy & Lindy

