

United Church Herald

Winter

December 2017

Special points of interest:

- ◇ Advent:
Preparation Party
Bells
- ◇ Stewardship
- ◇ Annual Reports
Annual Meeting
Proposed Changed to
By-Laws
- ◇ Epiphany
- ◇ Envelopes enclosed for:
Staff Appreciation
Flowers
Stewardship
- ◇ Christmas Eve Schedule
- ◇ Calendar



Advent Message *From the* Pastor **ADVENT**

This Advent, as we prepare for Christ's coming we share the good news in many ways. This year especially our advent is marked with the sound of bells.

On the First Sunday the Fire Bell rang out our Hope for a bright future.

On the Second Sunday Hand Bells proclaim the Peace Christ offers us all.

On the Third Sunday Sleigh Bells ring the glad tidings that when ever we gather Christ is with us and Joy follows.

On the Fourth Sunday the Dinner Bell invites us to a feast that has been prepared for us in LOVE.
and on Christmas all earth shall ring and all the bells together....

Advent Bells! We are celebrating this Advent season with bells! A fire bell... Sleigh bells... our new Bell Tree.... Our Bell Choir... Bells... Bells... Bells... Ring in the season! Jesus is the reason for the season! Join us in celebrating our Savior's birth! Bells... Bells... Bells... Ring in the season!



THANK YOU!

A couple of years ago when our church asked me if I would join the staff as a Lay Pastor and assist in the leadership of our wonderful church, I was overwhelmed that you would entrust me with such an important role in our church. After James joined our staff, I was asked to continue to serve as his mentor and I am delighted that James will soon be ordained. I have enjoyed, so very much, the opportunity to

work with James and to serve on the staff of our wonderful church. However, with a full time, and soon to be ordained pastor, I will step down from my position on staff and enjoy being a parishioner and minister along with all of you. I will join Peg and Mary as occasional pulpit supply and will continue the ministry of visitation and I welcome any of you who wish to join me. I am humbled by your outpouring of love and support. Thank you so very much.

~ Janet Wiseman

PASTOR STAFF RELATIONS:

Well it's that time of year again. Time to show appreciation for our wonderful staff that we have at the United Church of Newport. Starting after Christmas and for the next three weeks, until Annual Meeting, there will be staff appreciation envelopes included in the bulletins and at the church for your use. We would like to take this time to thank our staff for all that they do. They show

their dedication and love for our church through their jobs and keep our church running smoothly through out the year. With the necessary budget cuts this year, in lieu of staff raises we are asking that you reach a little deeper to show your appreciation to our staff via this one time monetary gift. I know money and saying a heart felt thanks just isn't enough for all that they do for our church but it is one way we can express our appreciation. In addition, Thank you to each and everyone of the members of this great church for all you do for the United Church of Newport and our community.

Sherry Bradley
Chair Pastor and Staff
Committee

TIDBITS FROM THE OFFICE~

If you would like to contribute to the Christmas poinsettia decorations you may do so by sending in a check with a note saying who you would like flowers to be in memory of or honor of. You can use the

enclosed envelope or send it to the church with your normal pledge. All I ask is that you get the information of who you would like to have the flowers honor or be given in memory of by Dec. 21st in order to get it into the Christmas Eve bulletins. Thank you.



As we head into the new year we first take a moment to look back over the past year. What have we accomplished? What do we need to finish? What has come to light that we want to do in the future? Yes, I am asking you to take a moment in this busy time of year to ponder on these questions. They are questions that we can apply to many aspects of our lives. Today I remind you that they are a good starting point for those of you responsible for drafting/

Office Hours & Staffing

Valerie normal Fall / Winter office hours from 9-12 Mon, **Thu and Fri. 9-2** with additional hours before or after dependent on scheduling requests.

802-334-6033 office
802-324-0659 cell

writing a report for whatever committee you might be on but especially for the United Church of Newport. Deadline for Committee reports is Sunday, January 7th. Also mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting scheduled for Sunday, January 21 after worship.

~Valerie



STEWARDSHIP

This year’s stewardship letter was double-sided both literally and figuratively. Taking the lead from other communities, the back of the letter listed just some of the ways in which we give our time and talents that make the church run so smoothly and by which we serve one another in so many ways. Everyone is invited to a celebration of our many contributions. A time to

offer up both our pledges and our “time and talents” slip on Sunday December 17, the Sunday of Joy. Please join in this joyful occasion and put your thinking caps on, it is often small talents, which can make a huge difference in the life of the church. We also invite suggestions and ideas for new ministries and new ways of doing ministries so that UCN can take an even bigger role in the community.

HANDBELL CHOIR

The Bells are Ringing. Your UCN Bell Choir is having a busy holiday season! The bell choir is sharing their music with you and the community in some form every weekend in December during a bell themed Advent. December 2nd we performed during the Goodrich Memorial Library's Annual Tree Lighting event with six holiday bell selections plus a ring/sing-along. The first Sunday of Advent Patty Stryker and Ruth Marquette shared two bell tree selections during the



offering music. Amy Newton asked our bell choir to accompany the choir anthems on two Sundays. The congregation had the chance to join us during a Christmas carol ring and sing time December 10th. We would like to share two Christmas pieces for the prelude December 17th, so come to church a little early so you don't miss it! There may also be a bell surprise at one of the December 24th services.

If you enjoy listening to our bell choir share their musical talents and wonder what it would be like to ring a bell or chime, we are recruiting for two positions or subs. We rehearse right after church on Sundays from about 11:15 to 1:00. We plan to enhance your musical worship experience during at least one Sunday service a month, and that takes rehearsals to accomplish. We would love to share the fun, music, and talent with you! Please contact Ruth Marquette, director, after church, by calling 673-2447 or by email at raamarq@hotmail.com if you are interested in finding out more about our group.

MISSION AND HOSPITALITY

THE GIVING TREE. A couple of local families came to our church asking for help in providing Christmas gifts for their children. We put their names, ages and gift ideas on paper ornaments and hung them on “The Giving Tree”. The very first Sunday all of the paper ornament disappeared from the tree! Our wonderful church family will be providing Christmas gifts for nine children in our neighborhood. Thank you for sharing the love of Christ! “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:40)

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

*Next meeting will be Mar 27th!
Happy Holidays*

Thank you! To all those who have supported the many events, activities, fundraisers, meals, etc... this past year. Our success is only due to the great effort

you put forth as an individual then combined with us as a whole. We raised more than we have in recent years which has allowed us to give more. Thank YOU! The Church thanks you, the organizations thank you, and the individuals thank you. Have a very Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year.

WINTER ACTIVITIES



**Epiphany Tree Burning
Saturday, Jan 6th**

Back by popular demand, we will be closing out the Christmas Season and marking the Epiphany of our LORD with the burning of our Christmas tree and wreaths at Sherry Bradley's

House in Coventry. This was a popular event last year and a wonderful way to transition from one season to the next and offer up our prayers in an old time burnt offering. The celebration, followed by snacks indoors will kick off around 4 PM on Saturday, January 6th, join us if you can. More information will be posted in the Sunday bulletins or you can call the church office a week before the event for more details, directions, etc.

ANNUAL MEETING

The difficulty we experienced in filling the previous Pastoral vacancies gave the Executive Board reason to examine the UCN By-Laws, specifically, Article VI: Alternating Denominational Leadership. It is the recommendation of the Executive Board, that we adopt the proposed change to Article VI. The purpose of this change is to make alternating the denomination of the pastor into a recommendation rather than a requirement, so the church can select the best minister available in the event of a

vacancy.
We will be voting on this change to the By-Laws at the Annual Meeting of the UCN Congregation on January 21, 2018.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
BY-LAW AMENDMENT
Article VI currently reads:

**ARTICLE VI ALTERNATING
DENOMINATIONAL
LEADERSHIP**

There shall be alternating denominational ministerial leadership between the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church. In the event of a pastoral vacancy, both conferences shall be notified. The minister (s) shall be called or appointed according to the procedure of the denomination of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ or that of the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Proposed Change:

ARTICLE VI ALTERNATING

**DENOMINATIONAL
LEADERSHIP**

In the event of a pastoral vacancy, both the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ and the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church shall be notified. The preference shall be that the denomination of the succeeding pastor shall be the alternate denomination of the vacating pastor. However, the United Church of Newport may, at the discretion of the Pastoral and Staff Relations Committee and Executive Committee, deviate from this pattern based on availability and desirability of possible successors from each denomination. There shall be no limit on successive pastors from a denomination other than the preference previously stated in this article shall be observed when any vacancy occurs. It shall also be the preference that in the event of co-pastors, they be of differing denominations, subject to the same discretion of the

relevant committees.
◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
Please keep this in mind, and plan to attend the meeting. A quorum of **30** people are needed to adopt any changes to the By-Laws.



REFORMATION 500
October marked the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's 95 Theses, a document that launched the Protestant Reformation and the flowering of theological debate, which has given us the incredible variety of churches we see today. In accordance with the call of faith leaders around the



world, including Pope Francis, we marked the anniversary with a joint celebration with St Mark's Episcopal Church. With more than 80 UCN members in attendance, 40 from St Mark's, and around 10 other guests joining us for the occasion, it was a memorable and vibrant service featuring a joint choir, and joint communion celebrated by James and Rev Christine Moseley. We hope that this celebration is just the beginning of an ever closer friendship with our brothers and sisters of faith across the community.
Stay tuned for more events to celebrate the ongoing Reformation Year including the return of the traditional Community Palm Sunday Celebration.

REFORMATION 500—
As part of our ongoing Reformation 500 Year, plans are underway to have the month of February as an ecumenical celebration of environmental stewardship. The hope is for the month to include speakers on the biblical imperatives and spiritual aspects of caring for our land, water, and air both locally and on a global level. Partnering with the Memphremagog Watershed Association and other area churches we will have the chance to learn, share, and fellowship with one-another as we share in God's creation. A winter ski trip is also a possibility, as the beauty of our world does not hibernate in in these winter months. Join us in person or in spirit as we explore this profound stewardship responsibility.

~James

On Reformation Sunday when St. Marks was with us we pooled the cash donation collected and sent the combined donation to help our brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico. Six hundred and seventy six dollars was collected and given to the

Lutheran Disaster Response. After some research, it was found to be one of the few organizations that was sending relief directly to Puerto Rico at that time. The other bonus to the Lutheran Disaster Response is that all money donated to them from the time of the hurricanes until Dec 30, 2017 would be doubled by Thrivent Finance and In Faith Community Foundation, a national charity with a mission to serve donors spread joy and change lives through charitable giving. So instead of sending \$676 to Puerto Rico, we sent \$1,352. THANK YOU!!!

The Lutheran Rose, that was on display at the altar for a few weeks,



was painted by Valerie Rittershausen. When asked what we should do with the Rose after being on display it was suggested by James that it be sent to Ascension Lutheran Church in South Burlington as a gift. Hence the reason for it being in the pictures taken for the UCN Christmas card. Valerie and Paul are long

time members of Ascension, thirty plus years. We want to thank Ascension for sharing them with us.



BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

How do you like the new look in our Fellowship Hall? The paint job is done and everything looks bright and clean. The tin ceiling was scrapped and a new coat of white paint applied. The walls are now a light blue/grey.

As we look forward to the New Year we still have projects that need to be addressed. We hope to find a solution to the reoccurring leaks from the flat roof on the “new” part of the building, upkeep to the church foundation, resealing and relining the parking lot, painting, etc.

We are looking for

members who might like to serve on our committee. In January we will say good-bye to Chuck Newton as his committee tenure ends. We want to thank Chuck for all his hard work. If you would like to be on the committee please see any committee member or let the office know. If you don't think you could commit to our once a month meeting but think you may be able to help from time to time on a church project, let us know that too!

NEW MEMBERS

Join us in our Sunday worship service on January 14th to welcome our many new members into the community. If you would like to become a member or are unsure about your formal membership status please contact the church office as soon as possible.

We are called to joyfully participate in our community and membership is a big part of how we declare our intention and devotion to Christ's church.

HELLO CHURCH,



My name is Mary Hoadley, although you may know me as “the girl from The Wellness Center,” or even just as the “brunette who sits in front of Nancy Newton,” on Sundays. What you might not know is that I grew up in this very church. Some of my very first memories happened in the walls of our beautiful church on Third Street. I have such a warm place in my heart for all the memories including the Advent parties, my wonderful Sunday school teachers, field trips to the pool at Stanstead College, my first Secret pal Mrs. Epler, and singing in the kid's choir and so many more! As a child I was baptized by Rev. Martha Peck, as a teenager I was a co-youth group president with Bud Vana, and before graduating I was Confirmed with Cathleen McCreary (Maurice and Alice Macie's

Daughter) as my mentor. Of all of these memories the one I most vividly remember is the day in Rev. Martha Peck's office where I was so blessed to become an “official member of the church.”

Since then there has been a lot of “life,” along with many other wonderful blessings. But through it all, something was always missing. There was that “still small voice” that kept calling me home to the United Church of Newport, and not just as a member. God had very consistently impressed on my heart a call to pursue a future in ministry. As much as I tried to ignore what God was saying or telling myself “not now”, I finally had what can only be considered a “God Moment” or what Oprah would describe as an “Aha Moment” to answer God's call and to do it now.

Flash forward to today and I am, currently a Member in Discernment with the United Church of Christ and actively pursuing Authorized Ministry. I am taking classes with the New York School of Ministry and about half way through my

core courses. Recently I have started leading worship and preaching at various churches in the community.

I am not sure where God will lead me on this path towards authorized Ministry and every time I think I have it all figured out, God starts to work in me in new ways. As much as this is all new to me, it feels like this was always a part of God's plan for me. And as I told family and friends when I started this new path; “I am still me. I am still Mary Hoadley. I am still a regular person with my own thoughts, opinions, and sense of humor. I always have and will continue to make plenty of mistakes but for now I choose to follow God's path.”

I welcome your prayers as I continue on this journey and please know that I pray for you and our congregation each and every day. May God continue to bless us all and I pray that you too listen for that still small voice, because I can promise you, God is still speaking to each and every one of us!

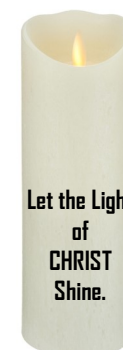
In Peace and Love,

~Mary S. Hoadley



A NOTE:

If you or a family member are in the hospital we want to know about it. Whether it's something routine or a surprise please let the church office know and let us know if you'd like a visit or if we can keep you in our prayers. Everyone in this community has the love and support of the whole community and our combined prayers have an amazing power of healing and comfort. You might not want people to make a big deal about you or a loved one being ill but please remember the Power of Prayer is an amazing thing.





Cookie Fare 2017



**THE ADVENT
PREPARATION PARTY**

What fun was had by all!
From trimming the tree;
singing Christmas carols;
making pine wreaths and
center pieces; ornaments,
decorating cookies to eat and
take home; and so much more.
THANK YOU so much to
ALL the ELVES who helped
make this possible: David
providing music to sing to,
Vern's woodworking project
created for all skill levels,
Denise's card making,
Valerie's cookie decoration.
Bettie was pleased with all
those who turned out to work
and create with pine boughs,
Marvelene brought us just the
right about of pizza, and
Nancy not just my right
assistant but some days my left
too! These are just a few of
the behind the scene and
upfront elves and helpers.
AGAIN—THANK YOU ONE
AND ALL.



Woodworking



Tree Trimming



Cookie Decorating

Ornament Making

Kitchen Duty



Card Making

**Singing Christmas
Carols**

Wreath Making




Family Time


There is one Christmas Carol that has always baffled me. What in the world do leaping lords, French hens, swimming swans, and especially the partridge who won't come out of the pear tree have to do with Christmas?

From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of their church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember.


-The *partridge* in a pear tree was **Jesus Christ**.




-Two *turtle doves* were the **Old and New Testaments**.




-*Three French hens* stood for **faith, hope and love**.



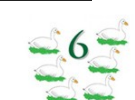
-The *four calling birds* were the **four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John**.




-The *five golden rings* recalled the Torah or Law, the first **five books of the Old Testament**.




-The *six geese a-laying* stood for the **six days of creation**.




-*Seven swans a-swimming* represented the **sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit--Prophesy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership, and Mercy**.




-The *eight maids a-milking* were the **eight beatitudes**.




-*Nine ladies dancing* were the **nine fruits of the Holy Spirit--Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control**.




-The *ten lords a-leaping* were the **ten commandments**.



-The *eleven pipers piping* stood for the **eleven faithful disciples**.



-The *twelve drummers drumming* symbolized the **twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed**.



So there is your history for today. This knowledge was shared with me and I found it interesting and enlightening and now I know how that strange song became a Christmas Carol...so pass it on if you wish.



~Unknown Author

Merry 12 Days of Christmas Everyone!

December 2017



January 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
17 WL—JM	18	19	20	21	22	23
				Community Meal @ noon—traditional turkey dinner		
24 WL—MH & JM	25	26	27	28	29	30
7 PM & 10 PM 				RED CROSS Blood Drive 10-3 pm		
31 WL—JM	1 JANUARY	2	3	4	5	6
			B&G mtg	Food Truck delivery		Epiphany—Tree burning Event 4:30
7 WL—	8	9	10	11	12	13
 Due to Valerie	Food Shelf	Food Shelf	Food Shelf Fin mtg 6pm Exec Bd mtg 7 pm			
14 WL—	15	16	17	18	19	20
				Community Meal		
21 WL—JM	22	23	24	25	26	27
ANNUAL MEETING		Artistic hOurs 9-12				

NEKO ISSUES ASSEMBLY

Saturday, January 20th
12pm - 4pm

BARTON UNITED CHURCH
Rte. 16 & Water Street
Barton, VT

GROWING LIST OF SPONSORS INCLUDES:

- Caledonia Grange #9
- Danville Congregational United Church of Christ
 - St. Mark's Episcopal Church
 - St. John's Episcopal Church
- The Center for an Agricultural Economy
 - United Church of Newport
- Universalist Unitarian Congregation of St. Johnsbury
 - Friends of NEKO

TO REGISTER CONTACT YOUR SPONSORING COMMITTEE
REPRESENTATIVE OR NEKO LEAD ORGANIZER BY 1/15:
MARTHA@HARDWICKAGRICULTURE.ORG
CALL OR TEXT: (802)323-6763

NORTHEAST KINGDOM ORGANIZING (NEKO) IS A PROJECT OF THE CENTER FOR AN
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY. ([HTTPS://HARDWICKAGRICULTURE.ORG](https://hardwickagriculture.org))

**CHILDREN'S
ACTIVITIES
PROVIDED**

CARPOOLING FROM:

Hardwick
St. Johnsbury
Newport
& available as needed

AGENDA

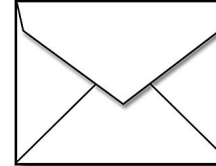
Noon: Lunch
1:00: Welcome
1:30: Report Outs
2:00: Listening
3:00: Issue Selection

Snow Date Feb 3rd

**COMING TOGETHER
TO TAKE ACTION
ON ISSUES
THAT MATTER!**

We have enclosed an envelope for your convenience:

- ☐ For staff appreciation
- ☐ Christmas Flower Fund,
(please note if you would like them in memory or honor of ...)
- ☐ Stewardship pledge card.



Winter Solstice Concert

To Celebrate the Returning Light!

The Lotus Two

Paula Hansen-Graveline, Flute

Linda Schneck, Harp and Piano

With a diverse program of music from

Hildegard von Bingen to J.S. Bach, to George Gershwin,
Janis Joplin, and the contemporary classical jazz
composer, Claude Bolling

Thursday, Dec. 21st

7:00 PM

Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville, Vermont

Admission is free and the library is handicapped accessible.

In keeping with the symbolism of the lotus, the *Lotus Two* is
dedicated to peace, beauty, and ongoing transformation through
music.



SUNDAY

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

10 AM

WELCOME MARY HOADLEY
4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“LOVE”



7 PM

ALL THE BELLS!

“HOPE”, “PEACE”, “JOY”, & “LOVE”

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE



10 PM

ALL THE BELLS!

“HOPE”, “PEACE”, “JOY”, & “LOVE”

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

WITH HOLY COMMUNION



Happy 100th Birthday, Dot!



***KEEP ALL OF THE
BELOW COMING!***

- ♦ CAN TABS FOR SHRINER'S HOSPITAL
- ♦ GENERAL MILLS BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION\
- ♦ LARGE GROCERY BAGS —PAPER AND PLASTIC

**Thursday @ Noon
December 21st**

**Free Community
Christmas Meal:**

Turkey, mashed
potatoes, gravy,
squash, corn, cranberry
sauce, rolls, assorted
homemade pies &
beverages

**Vivian Spates will
grace us with
beautiful Christmas
music on the piano.**

JOIN US!

**United Church of Newport
63 Third Street
Newport, VT 05855**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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