

# THE STEEPLE

## Williston Federated Church

*An Open and Affirming, Reconciling Congregation*

### Pastor's Message

After the alleluias, I'm always left wondering how we receive Easter. How do we take that promise of new life — of life when death seemed the final word — and allow it to inform our living? How do we incorporate it into our spiritual lives so that all other aspects of our lives are re-formed by it? How do we take Easter to heart?

The answer I've always arrived at is, "Not very easily." That's not helpful, I know, but it is honest. And honesty, when it comes to Easter, is a good place to start.

The fact is that Easter promises can sound hollow to our tired ears. The story about that hard-to-understand man with special powers beyond our own who was raised from the dead often doesn't feel like our story. Our story is much more down-to-earth: No angels in white, meeting us at the tombs of our lives; no disappearing bodies; no surprising encounters with people we thought were safely stowed six feet under.

I believe that how we receive Easter depends on whether it's a once-a-year celebration for us or an attitude of openness we bring to each new day. I was reminded of this reading Mary Oliver's, "Landscape":

Isn't it plain the sheets of moss, except  
that they have no tongues, could lecture  
all day if they wanted about

spiritual patience? Isn't it clear  
the black oaks along the path are standing  
as though they were the most fragile of flowers?

Every morning I walk like this around  
the pond, thinking: if the doors of my heart  
ever close, I am as good as dead.

Every morning, so far, I'm alive. And now  
the crows break off from the rest of the darkness  
and burst up into the sky — as though

all night they had thought of what they would like  
their lives to be, and imagined  
their strong, thick wings.

Mary Oliver, a master of acknowledging the extraordinary in the ordinary, reminds us of the importance of keeping the doors of our hearts open. Failing to do this, our spiritual death is assured. We only remain alive when we are aware of the teachings of the moss, the signs of the oaks, the parable of the crows taking flight, and every other way that this creation, our sisters and brothers here with us, and our Creator God speaks to us of life renewed. When we are so open then Easter becomes part of our own spiritual landscapes.

In this Easter season, as we attempt to receive Easter promises, may we actively open ourselves to those places in creation, our relationships, and our church community where renewal is being offered. And, like the crows of Oliver's poem, may we burst up into the sky out of our darkness, born on the winds of God's inspiring Spirit, with wings fashioned and strengthened by our call to live as we believe God is calling us to live. With hearts open to God's presence, we are still alive!

Peace, Jonathan



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Phone: 878-5792  
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Sunday Worship  
Service:  
9:30 AM

**Interim Pastor:**  
Rev. Jonathan New  
**Director of Children's  
and Youth Ministries:**

Laurie Chipman  
**Church Secretary:**

Brenda Racht  
**Organist and Junior  
Choir Accompanist:**

Carolyn Pillsbury  
**Music Director:**  
Martin Hain

**Nursery Caregiver:**  
Michelle Davis





**Maundy Thursday Observance — April 5<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 P.M.**

Our service will take place on Thursday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. and will include Communion and a

Service of Tenebrae. Maundy Thursday commemorates the institution of Holy Communion and the giving of the new commandment (Latin: *mandatum*) that we should love one another even as Christ loves them (John 13:34-35) at the Last Supper. *Tenebrae* is the Latin term for “shadows.” The Service of Tenebrae includes scripture lessons telling the story of the Last Supper and Jesus’ passion, and the gradual extinguishing of candlelight. Please speak with Rev. New or any member of the worship committee if you are interested in being a reader. We hope you will plan to attend this moving Holy Week worship experience.

**Easter Sunrise Service — April 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 A.M.**

We invite everyone to join us at the home of Tony and Susan Lamb on Easter morning for a Sunrise Service. Williston Church youth will lead this brief but joyous service at 6:00 a.m. (Sunrise is at approximately 6:22 a.m.!) Refreshments will be served following worship. The Lambs live on the corner of Oak Hill Road and Beebe Lane in Williston. Beebe Lane is the entrance to the Lake Iroquois Beach and State Fishing Access. Come be one of the first to declare, “Christ is risen!”

**Easter Worship — April 8<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 A.M.**

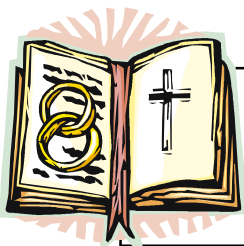
Our Easter worship will also include a 9:30 a.m. worship service that includes a brass quartet, choir anthems, children’s time, hymns, and an Easter message.

**WFC Annual Reports Deadline**

If you are the chairperson of a Committee at WFC, then you know it is time to get your report ready for the Annual Meeting. The annual report needs to be ready prior to the Annual Meeting, which will be held on June 10 this year, immediately following worship. It would be helpful if you could type your report in Times New Roman 12 point font. Please e-mail reports to the church office no later than May 15. If you need a copy of an older report, they are available in the church office. Many thanks!


**New Member Bio**

Williston Federated Church welcomes Sandra Lawson, who joined the church November 19, 2006. Sandy was born in Newport, VT and spent most of her life in Orleans County. Before moving to Williston last summer, she had lived for 16 years in Nashville, TN. Sandy has two sons; Mike and Aimee Hilliker, who also joined in November, and their children Nathan, Alyssa, Nick & Aria and Matt and Amy Hilliker, who live in Coventry. Sandy worked for many years in education and most recently in motels and in retail. Her life's passion is to help others and treat them with kindness; to live by the Golden Rule - Matthew 7:12 "Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them." Sandy loves to travel, enjoys the beauty of nature and the great outdoors and she believes firmly that it is imperative that we do what we can to preserve the environment. When asked what helped in her decision to join WFC, she said that she has always been a Methodist. She is impressed by the opportunities for participation in the life of the church based on an individual's interest (she has already joined the choir) and the church has a wonderful outreach into the larger community. Welcome Sandy!



**LECTIONARY**

Each Sunday we join Christians from many faith communities in hearing God's Word as selected from the *Revised Common Lectionary* ~ readings that over a period of 3 years take us through much of the Bible. Following are the Lectionary readings for this month ~ one or more are read aloud during the service.

<p>April 1 <b>Palm Sunday</b> Luke 19:28-40 Psalm 118: 1-2,19-29 Isaiah 50:4-9a Psalm 31:9-16 Philippians 2:5-11 Luke 22:14-23:56 or Luke 23:1-49</p>	<p>April 8 <b>Easter Day</b> Acts 10:34-43 Psalm 118:1-2,14-24 1 Corinthians 15:19-26 John 20:1-18 or Luke 24:1-12</p> 	<p>April 15 Acts 5:27-32 Psalm 150 Revelations 1:4-8 John 20:19-31</p>	<p>April 22 Acts 9:1-6(7-20) Psalm 30 Revelations 5:11-14 John 21:1-19</p>	<p>April 29 Acts 9:36-43 Psalm 23 Revelations 7:9-17 John 10:22-30</p>
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## THE TRUSTEE'S CORNER

### YOUR VOTES ARE IN!

By an overwhelming margin, the Congregation voted to not install shutters over the kite windows. There was only one dissenting vote and his/her name shall be secret forever!

### Fire Sprinkler System

The bids for the installation of a Church sprinkler system have been analyzed and we are about to award the contract. Our efforts now will be concentrated on discussing fund-raising efforts with the Official Board. Your Trustees feel strongly that the protection of our beautiful Church is a top priority and hope that all of you agree.

### Parsonage Windows

We had proposed installing modern aluminum double-paned windows in the Parsonage before our new Pastor arrived because the old wooden ones were so decayed and leaky that there was a lot of heat loss and moisture buildup. Unfortunately the Williston Historical and Architectural Advisory Committee has said "no". Because the building is historically protected, we must replace the existing windows with wooden duplicates. This will be a bit more expensive. We have begun looking for contractors who can do the job.

### Steeple

A steeplejack company in Waitsfield has inspected our steeple and found areas needing prompt repair. We are now waiting on competitive bids and hope that work can begin as soon as the weather cooperates.

### Lift

Our Platform Lift is now registered with the Vermont Department of Public Safety and we are on a waiting list for lubrication and inspection by Accessibility Systems, Inc.

That's all for the month of March!

### Thank You

Have you noticed the new paint job in the Women's bathroom? What a beautiful color! And that stenciling! Our thanks to Joe & Sylvia Maloney, Carol Burbank and Barb Powell for repainting the bathroom. The Men's room may be next!

## Transportation Ministry

Both the Membership Committee and Caring Circle are working on a project that is called the Transportation Ministry. Lately we have become aware of several church folks who could benefit from this ministry. We are still trying to be more precise in our goals; however we need to make a start. So far we know there are people needing rides to church services and events, to go to appointments, and to help with errands. Some need more assistance than others, and perhaps might be limited as to the type of vehicle that would be used.

We would like to identify those needing rides (and what type) as well as those willing to help and when the drivers would be available. After we get that information, we ideally would like to have two or three people to be "dispatchers".. in other words to coordinate the riders and the drivers.

Some things we need to accomplish are finding out if there might be an insurance issue, as well as reaching the folks who don't come to church (because they can't get a ride!)

Any advice would be most welcome. Please contact Sarah Hibbeler (872-0827) or Barb Powell (878-5347).

## TELL US ABOUT IT





This is a reminder that the Pastor and your Music and Worship Committee always welcome feedback from the congregation about the worship opportunities offered at Williston Federated Church. The blended traditions in which we worship mean that we are not bound by one particular order of worship and enjoy wide latitude for injecting ways to enhance and deepen the worship experience. Most folks are inclined to make their comments and suggestions about worship to the Pastor and that's fine but, remember, the Music and Worship Committee is a group especially dedicated to regularly meeting and discussing the worship life of the church. We want to assure you that we're open to listening to your comments on the present order of worship and willing to consider your suggestions for changes in the way we worship. If the singing of a particular hymn or anthem some Sunday morning strikes you as inappropriate, let us know about it. If the prayer time touched your heart and moved you in a special way, tell us about it. If you sometimes wonder why something is included in the service, ask us for an explanation. The committee will talk about your questions and suggestions and respond to you. While some folks are comfortable with making comments or bestowing compliments directly, others prefer to be less direct. If you wish to just drop us a note, then please use the "Suggestion Box" currently located on a table in the lobby outside Fellowship Hall. The Music and Worship Committee thanks you for your interest.

Carolyn Pillsbury  
Cindy Cota  
Marcia Cadmus

Gayle Goodwin  
Carol Lewis  
Esta Brayton

Joe Maloney  
Carol Jackson



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1 9:30 am Worship 11:00 am Youth Ministry</p> 	2	<p>3 10-12 Senior Exercise <b>Peace Vigil</b> 5:15pm 7:00 pm <b>Membership</b> 7:00 pm <b>Music</b> &amp; <b>Worship</b> 7:30 pm <b>Trustees</b></p>	<p>4 7:30 pm AA  Choir 6,7, 8:15</p>	<p>5 7:30 am Rotary 9 am <b>Caring</b> <b>Circle</b>  10-12 Senior Exercise  <b>7 pm Maundy</b> <b>Thursday</b> <b>Service</b></p>	6 6:30 am Men's Bible Study	7
<p>8 6:00 am Sunrise</p>  <p>9:30 am Worship  <b>Easter</b></p>	9	<p>10  10-12 Senior Exercise  7:00 pm <b>Official</b> <b>Board</b></p>	<p>11 <b>Finance</b> at 7pm  7 pm <b>Education</b>  7:30 pm AA</p>	<p>12 7:30 am Rotary  10-12 Senior Exercise Choir 6,7, 8:15  <b>5:30 pm Pastor/</b> <b>Staff Relations</b></p>	13 6:30 am Men's Bible Study  <b>7pm Cabaret</b> <b>Night</b> <b>Fundraiser</b>	14
<p>15 9:30 am Worship 6-8:30 pm All Youth</p>	16 <i>Steeple deadline</i>	<p>17 10-12 Senior Exercise  Dismas Meal</p>	18 7:30 pm AA	19 7:30 am Rotary  10-12 Senior Exercise	20 6:30 am Men's Bible Study	21
<p>22 9:30 am Worship  11-1 Jr. High Youth or all Youth  ?6-8 pm Sr. High Night</p>	23	<p>24 10-12 Senior Exercise  7:00 pm <b>Missions &amp;</b> <b>Social</b> <b>Concerns</b></p>	25 7:30 pm AA	26 7:30 am Rotary  10-12 Senior Exercise	27 6:30 am Men's Bible Study  4Word07 in Liverpool	28  4Word07 in Liverpool
<p>29 9:30 am Worship 11-1 Jr High Youth?</p> <p>4Word07 in Liv- erpool</p>	30					

**The Steeple  
Williston Federated Church**

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Phone: 802-878-5792  
E-mail: office@steeple.org.  
RETURN SERVICE  
REQUESTED

**Come, Meet Christ, Go Serve**

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Label goes up to the line  
covering these words.  
Thanks

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### Membership Opportunity Coming Soon

On Sunday, **April 15th**, there will be a membership information meeting after worship. If you are interested in joining the church or if you just want to learn more about WFC, please come to this meeting. The session will include a history of the church and it's federation with the United Methodist Church & the United Church of Christ and how we operate today as a Federated Church. Child care and snacks will be provided. Reception of new members will take place during worship on May13th. If you are interested in joining or if you have questions about church membership, please plan to attend this meeting, April15th, 11:00 - 12:30 in the sitting room, or speak to either Rev. New or Carol Bouchard.

### Women of the Church Book Group

We begin at 5:30 pm with a potluck supper. For April, we are scheduled to meet on April 18th at Maude Cameron's house. The book for April is: Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen. All women are warmly invited!

## **Consecration Sunday Is Coming Sunday, May 6, 2007**

Congregations that approach financial stewardship from a biblical perspective do not view the money Christians give to their church merely as a way to pay its bills. Rather, such congregations see financial contributions as a way to help people grow spiritually in their relationship with God by supporting their church's mission and ministry with a percentage of their incomes.

Our congregation's finance committee has selected the *New Consecration Sunday Stewardship Program* as a way to teach the biblical and spiritual principles of generous giving in our stewardship education emphasis this year.

*New Consecration Sunday* is based on the biblical philosophy of the need of the giver to give for his or her own spiritual development, rather than on the need of the church to receive. Instead of treating people like members of a social club who should pay dues, we will treat people like followers of Jesus Christ who want to give unselfishly as an act of discipleship. *New Consecration Sunday* encourages people toward proportionate and systematic giving in response to the question, "What percentage of my income is God calling me to give?" During morning worship on Consecration Sunday, we are asking our attendees and members to make their financial commitments to our church's missionary, benevolent, and educational ministries in this community and around the world. Every attendee and member who completes an *Estimate of Giving Card* does so voluntarily by attending morning worship on Sunday, May 6, Consecration Sunday. We urge people to attend who feel strongly opposed to completing a card. The procedure is done in such a way that no one feels personal embarrassment if he or she chooses not to fill out a card.

We will do no home solicitation to ask people to complete cards. During morning worship our guest leader will conduct a brief period of instruction and inspiration, climaxed by members making their commitments as a confidential act of worship.

We will encourage participation in Consecration Sunday events through the Consecration Sunday team and finance committee members. Since we will make no follow up visits to ask people to complete their cards, we will make every effort to inform, inspire, and commit everyone to attend Consecration Sunday worship.

## **"Called to Care: Training For Lay Caregivers" — Sundays in May & June**

As a congregation, we are ever seeking to live out with renewed faithfulness Jesus' command to love one another. In an effort to strengthen our church as a community that cares, called by a God who cares, the Caring Circle will be sponsoring a four-session workshop series titled, "Called to Care: Training for Lay Caregivers." Acknowledging that many of us are already extending care to others, these training sessions are designed to enhance the skills for and ministries of caregiving by laypersons. Called to Care will address such issues as Christian perspectives on caregiving, the challenges of carrying out a ministry of presence, and approaches for ministering to people who are sick, bereaved, or dying. The Caring Circle's larger hope is to develop a trained group of caregivers within our congregation who will work with our pastor in a shared ministry of visitation. However, anyone who wishes to be better equipped to offer caregiving is encouraged to participate. Dates for the one-and-a-half -hour sessions of "Called to Care" have tentatively been scheduled for Sundays in May and June, following worship. Please speak with Jonathan or any member of the Caring Circle — Carol Burbank, Sarah Hibbeler, Ginger Isham, Ruth Magill, Ruth Painter, Barb Powell, Jane Stickney — if you are interested, would like to weigh in on the workshop series dates, or have questions about "Called to Care."

### **Audio Worship Tapes Available**

Audio tapes of our Sunday worship service are now available. Please contact the church office or Nancy Stone, tape ministry coordinator, if you would like a cassette for your use or to share with family and friends. (We regret that, at this time, it is not possible for us to make copies of the worship service in CD format.)

### **Lenten Study on April 1**

**The Peace and Non-Violence Task Force** will present the final Lenten session on April 1 from 11-12:30 in the Sitting Room. Parents of children of all ages are welcome to this panel presentation and discussion about communication within families and raising children in an increasingly violent world. If you wish to attend but will need child care contact Sally Metro or Ruth Painter.