

THE STEEPLE

Williston Federated Church

An Open and Affirming, Reconciling Congregation

Pastor's Message

Dear Members and Friends of the Williston Federated Church,

As we prepare to say goodbye to 2008 with all of its joys and challenges; as we prepare to greet 2009 with all that the future has to hold, it is good to pause and reflect. I look back to the past year and give God thanks for the sacred privilege of serving this church family. I care about you deeply and hold you in my prayers daily. I also look ahead to 2009 and remember a quote (although I don't remember who said it), "we don't know what the future holds but we do know who holds the future." I turn in remembrance of the past year and place all in the hands of God - my family and loved ones, colleagues and co-workers, those for whom I was able to offer care and concern, those whom have offered me care and concern, and those people and situations where I have had differences and struggles. I also place in the hands of God in this New Year my whole life, hopes, dreams, joys; specific prayers for special needs, and the willingness to make room for all that will surprise me. I close by offering this New Year's gift to you, a poem from Joyce Rupp that appears in her book, "Out of the Ordinary: Prayers, Poems, and Reflections for Every Season." The poem is titled, *Standing at the Gate of the New Year...*

Sacred Mystery,
waiting on the threshold of this new year,
you open the gates and beckon to me:

"Come! Come!
Be not wary of what awaits you as you enter the unknown terrain,
be not doubtful of your ability to grow from its joys and sorrows.

For I am with you. I will be your Guide.
I will be your Protector. You will never be alone."

Guardian of this new year,
I set aside my fears, worries, concerns, I open my life to mystery, to beauty,
To hospitality, to questions, to the endless opportunity
of discovering You in my relationships,
And to all the silent wisps of wonder that will draw me to your heart.

I welcome your unfailing Presence
And walk with hope into this new year.

Peace,

Pastor Joan



**January
2009
Vol. 27
No. 1**

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Sunday Worship
Service:
9:30 AM

Pastor:
Rev. Joan Newton O'Gorman
**Director of Children's
and Youth Ministries:**
Laurie Chipman
Church Secretary:
Suzi Ange-Roland
**Organist and Choir
Accompanist:**
Carolyn Pillsbury
Music Director:
Martin Hain
Nursery Caregiver:
Michelle Davis

Memorial Tree Lighting

Vermont Respite House invites you to attend the Memorial Tree Lighting and Remembrance Ceremony on Sunday, January 11, 2009 from 2-4 pm at the Williston Federated Church. This ceremony is an annual tradition at Respite House - a chance to gather to honor and remember our loved ones. The Vermont Respite House Memorial Tree remains lit during the holiday season. We invite you to participate by purchasing a bulb. Your \$10 gift will light a bulb in memory of the person you have named to be honored. Your donation is appreciated and supports the care given to over 100 people and their families each year. For more information, call Maria McGrath at 860 4435 or e-mail at mcgrath@vnacares.org.

Silent Auction Thank You

On behalf of the Junior & Senior High Youth, I would like to thank all the people who contributed items or services for our recent Silent Auction. I would also like to thank all those that placed bids. As a result of your generosity, the Youth Group was able to raise \$1800. The money raised will help reduce the amount that youth pay to attend YAC, 4Word, Heifer Overlook Farm or Soulfest. Lillian Coletta

January's Women of the Church Book Discussion & Potluck - Susan Vieth will be hosting us Wednesday January 14th from 5:00-8:30pm. Her address is 3838 South Road. We will be discussing The Shack by Wm. Paul Young.

Bazaar Wrap Up

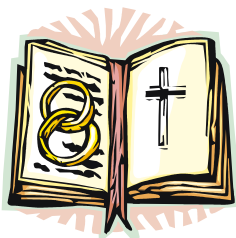
Many thanks to all the wonderful elves who helped to make the Christmas Bazaar a huge success. Thanks go to all who baked, made crafts, brought in plants and attic treasures, helped with set up, worked during the bazaar and helped clean up. A special thanks to the kitchen crew for keeping us well nourished. We raised over \$3000 which goes in support of the many mission projects that the Women of the Church support.

Friendship Supper

Pastor Staff Committee is holding our Friendship Supper on Friday, February 13, 2009, in the Fellowship Hall.

Come on Friday for a laugh,
A Friendship Supper by Pastor Staff.
Bring a dish to share,
Plates and silverware,
And a poem, song, or epitaph.

Poetry reading will be our fun;
Bring poems of yours or anyone.
Plan to come and read
Or if it's not your speed
Just listen until we are done!



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.

January 4

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

January 11

Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

January 18

1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20)
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

January 25

Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

The Williston Community Food Shelf is Now Open

Thanks to all the volunteers who made this dream come true. To date the WCFS has served 50 families. It took many hours to set up the shelves and make sure all the food was date checked and placed on the shelves for our opening. Once the shelves were full with the 15,000 lbs of food and drink given to us by the Compassionate Coalition, donations were given to the Hinesburg Food Shelf, Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf, St George after school program and the Salvation Army. Many thanks to Deb Beckett, Libby Flegenheimer, Cathy and Evan Michaels, Polly Malik, Reg Melrose, Joan O'Gorman, Joy Pashby Larry Pillsbury, Shirley Rounds, June and Ryan Simmons, Jane Stickney, Vickie Walker and Mary Ann and Charlie Wolf. The Williston Community Food Shelf is located at Maple Tree place on the second floor in the same building that houses Ben & Jerry's and Asian Bistro. Hours: Tues 6-8 PM, Thurs 9- 11 AM and Sat 8 -10 AM. Please pass this information along to anyone who lives in St. George or Williston, who you know can use the extra help during these difficult times.

Reaching Across the Racial Divide

I am so excited to have the Troy Conference Commission on Religion and Race hold their diversity training at welcoming Williston Federated Church! My favorite communities coming together! Please save Saturday, January 10th to welcome youth: Ondia Flowers, Deedee & Dana Nickens, Erin Moore, Dudley OKonge from the Emmaus church in Albany, NY. They will be presenting vignettes and challenging our conversations in the morning and in the afternoon. We will discuss ways to have discussions at our home churches around race and diversity. Gathering begins at 9 to 9:30am. The program begins 9:30am and ends 3pm. Lunch & snacks will be provided. Invite everyone you can think of. Lets close our divisions and unite! For further questions and information call Joy Lowenthal at 878-0240 or email at joylowenthal@Yahoo.com.

Prayer for World Peace

An Ecumenical service with music from the Taize Community accompanied by harps at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul on the corner of Cherry and Battery Streets on New Year's Eve 6—6:45 pm. A First Night button is not required. Sponsored by Pax Christi Burlington, First United Methodist Church and Cathedral Church of St. Paul. A complete list of contributing churches will appear on the program.

Senior High Leader/Helper Needed

The Senior High Sunday School class needs a leader & helper for the Winter term. It is easy and rewarding. No preparation needed. Senior High leaves worship after the sermon and the basis of the discussion is the sermon. The Senior High students are enjoyable. Robin Coletta and Vickie Walker led the Fall term so if you have any questions, please feel free to ask them.

A Special Thank You Note

Dear first graders, A few days ago our Pastor, Joan, called on me and brought me a beautiful gift - a nicely fringed lap robe. She told me that you children had made it for an old person. Well, I think I qualify as I will become 92 years of age this month. I find it very comfortable and warm and use it when I'm in my reclining chair, which is most of my daytime life. I wish to say thank you, thank you thank you. May you do more nice for others as you go through life. Again, thank you very much. Very sincerely, Art Tuthill.

Quiet Meal

The women of the Essex United Methodist Church cordially invite you to a Quiet Meal in observance of a "Call to Prayer and Self—Denial" on Monday, January 12, 2009 at our church. The Quiet Meal will be served at 6:30pm followed by a program in the church sanctuary. We hope you will be able to join us. Please RSVP by January 4th to Judy McDonald at 879-1555 or JLMVT1@aol.com. We look forward to seeing you and extend our blessings for a joyous holiday season.

UCC Women to Celebrate "Together Building Bridges"

United Church of Christ Women from all of New England will gather in Burlington on March 12th, 13th and 14th for their 8th celebration. The theme "Together Building Bridges...a time to break down and a time to build up..." Ecclesiastes 3:3. In 1980 during the Annual Meeting of the New England Women's Fellowship Presidents, five women had a dream, That dream was to reach out to the women in the pews, to involve them in learning and sharing about their faith. The dream was realized in 1982 when the first celebration, "Weaving the Fabric of Our Faith", took place in Portland, Maine. Over 1000 women took part in that event and many looked forward to and participated in similar celebrations which have been held every four years ever since. Over the years, this has become intergenerational event. Celebration VIII—Together Building Bridges offers exciting opportunities for discovering and understanding differences. Topics such as race, immigration, sexuality, economics, Generational Differences, and Worship Choices will be examined. Plan to join us to make new friends and re-establish old ties with people from New England and Beyond. We celebrate our faith, our heritage and our woman-hood, as we pray, sing laugh and learn. We invite you to mark your calendars for March 12th, 13th and 14th, 2010. Be with us to celebrate "Together Building Bridges"!

Jump Greeting

The Board of Directors and staff of Joint Urban Ministry Project (JUMP) would like to extend a Holiday Greeting to all the JUMP Supporting Churches and their members. May your community of faith be blessed this holiday season. Offered with gratitude for all you do, by the Board and Staff of the Joint Urban Ministry Project.

**The Steeple
Williston Federated Church**

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Label goes up to the line
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Thanks

Come, Meet Christ, Go Serve

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Last week's severe ice storms throughout Vermont & New Hampshire left thousands of homes and businesses without power, crippling virtually all aspects of everyday life. A number of Red Cross blood drives were cancelled or poorly attended as a result of this first Nor'easter of the year. The impact of the storm comes at the height of the busy holiday season, a time when blood donations already tend to decline. Please take the time to donate where and when you can. Share your health with those less fortunate! Every 2 seconds an American needs to receive blood. It is estimated that 7 in 10 of us are going to need transfusions at some point in our lives, yet only 5% of eligible donors ever give blood. It just isn't enough. Call 1-800-GIVE LIFE or visit www.newenglandblood.org for additional information or to check on your eligibility. The American Red Cross Donor Center, 32 No. Prospect St. in Burlington. Walk in or call now to make an appointment: 802-658-6400. Open daily from 9:00 – 6:00 and 7:30 – 1:00 on Saturday. Yummy Luncheon served throughout the day. Enter a Free raffle to win a Harley Davidson Motorcycle!